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MARVEL COMICS GROUP

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BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY



the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

FEATURING:
THE RETURN OF
MARY JANE
WATSON!

PLUS:
A MAJOR TURNING
POINT IN THE LIFE
OF SPIDER-MAN!



OPTIONS!



J.R. JR. + BEATY

STAN LEE PRESENTS:

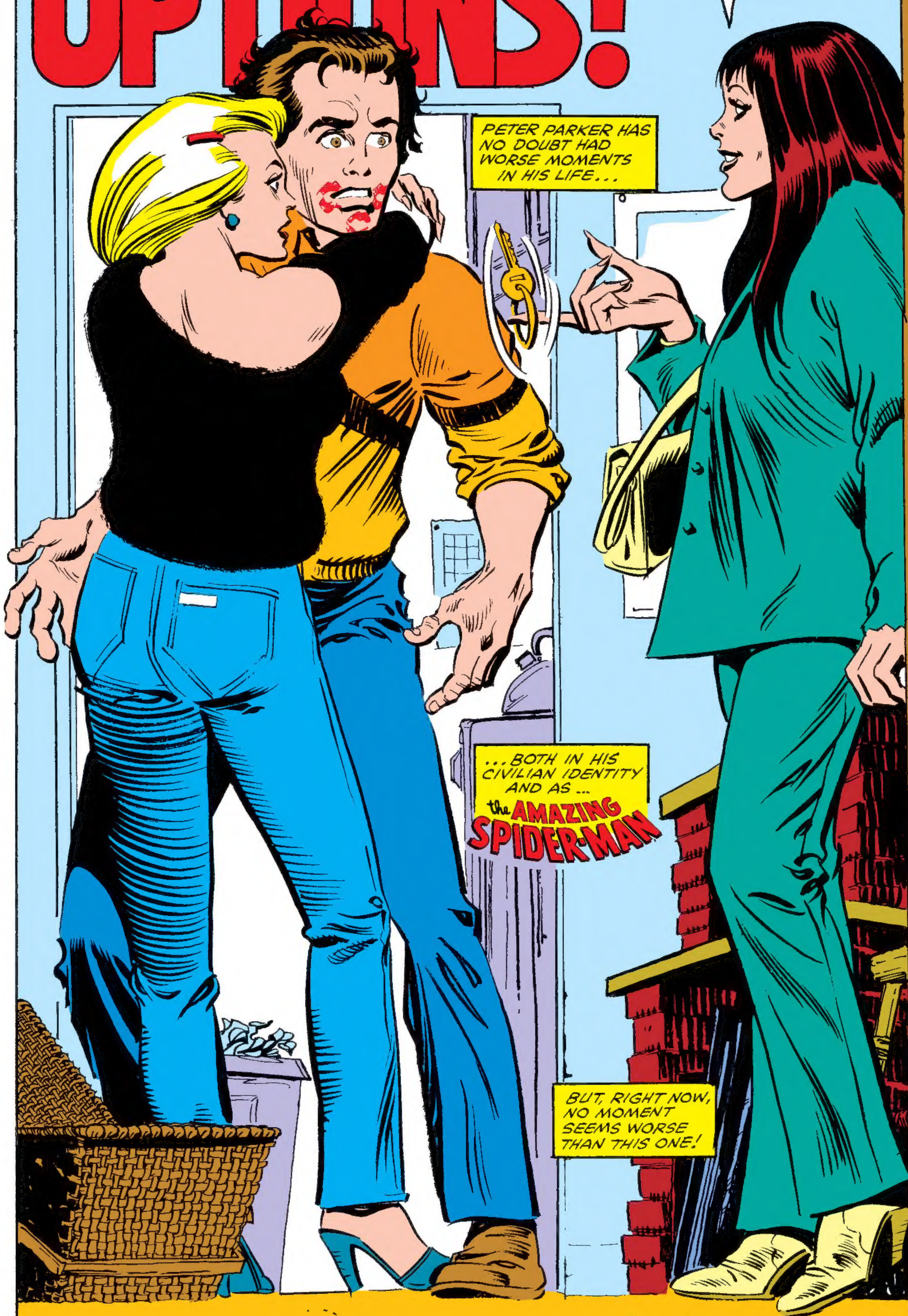
OPTIONS!

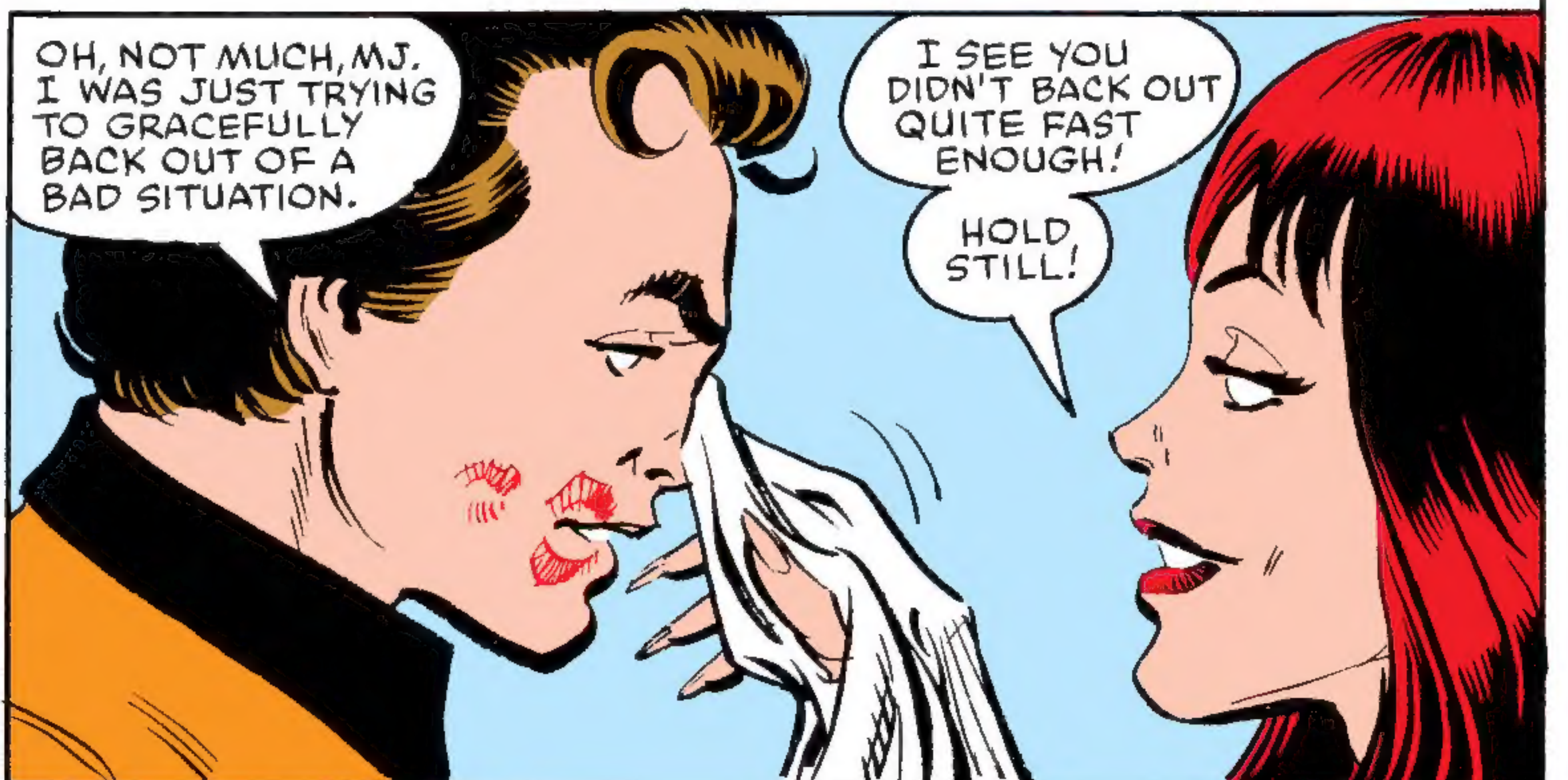
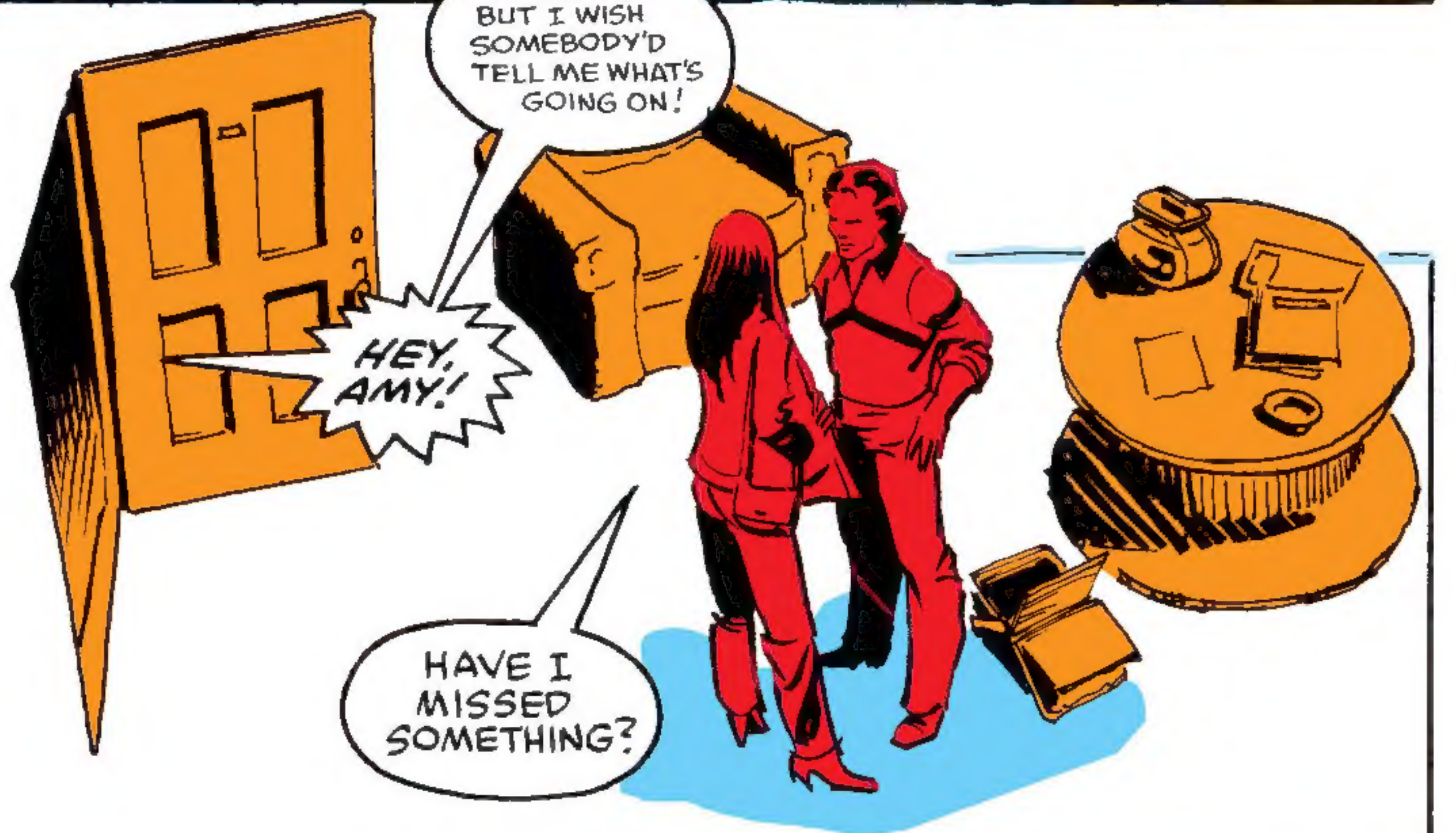
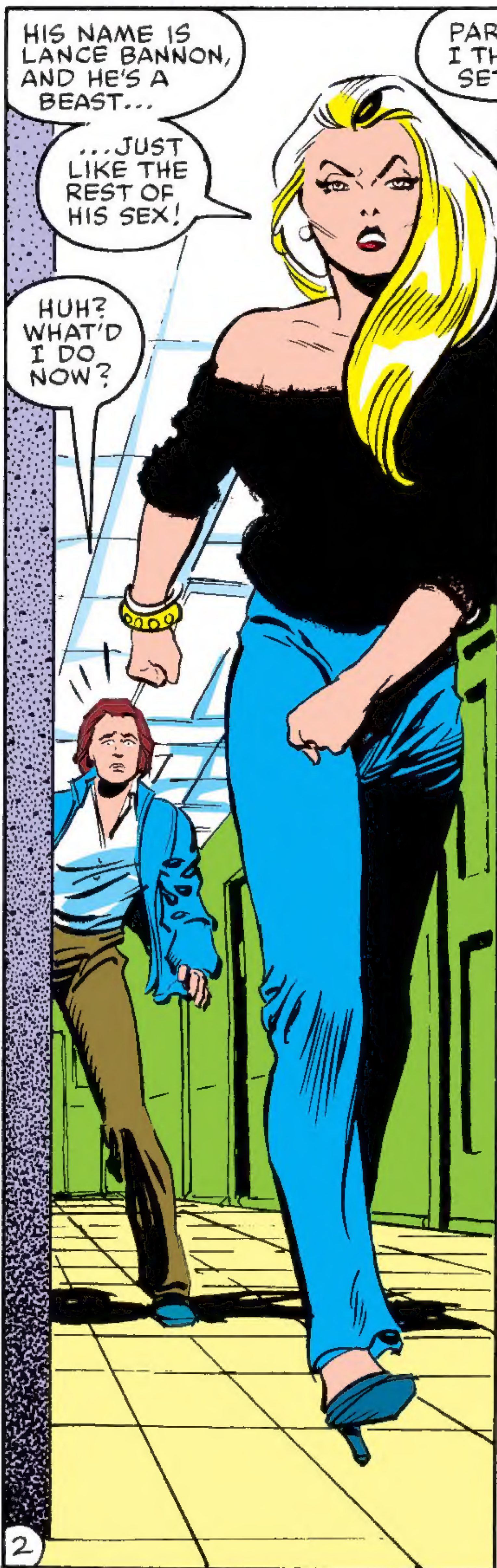
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE
BEEN KEEPING BUSY
WHILE I WAS GONE,
TIGER!

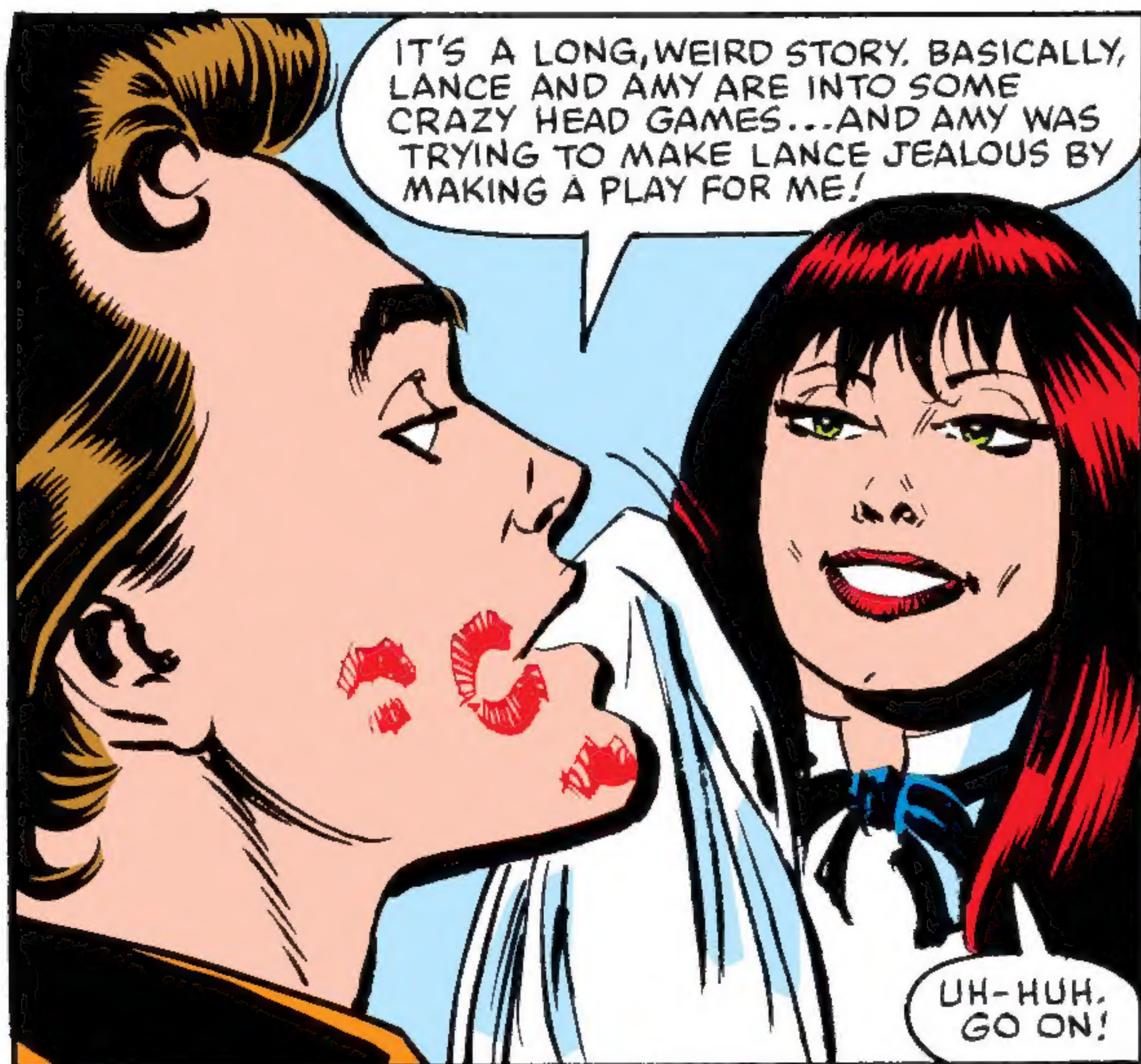
PETER PARKER HAS
NO DOUBT HAD
WORSE MOMENTS
IN HIS LIFE...

... BOTH IN HIS
CIVILIAN IDENTITY
AND AS ...
**the AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN**

BUT, RIGHT NOW,
NO MOMENT
SEEMS WORSE
THAN THIS ONE!







IT'S A LONG, WEIRD STORY. BASICALLY, LANCE AND AMY ARE INTO SOME CRAZY HEAD GAMES...AND AMY WAS TRYING TO MAKE LANCE JEALOUS BY MAKING A PLAY FOR ME!

UH-HUH. GO ON!



NATURALLY, WHEN I FOUND OUT, I DIDN'T WANT ANY PART OF IT. I TRIED TO SET UP A MEETING BETWEEN LANCE AND AMY TO GET EVERYTHING OUT IN THE OPEN.

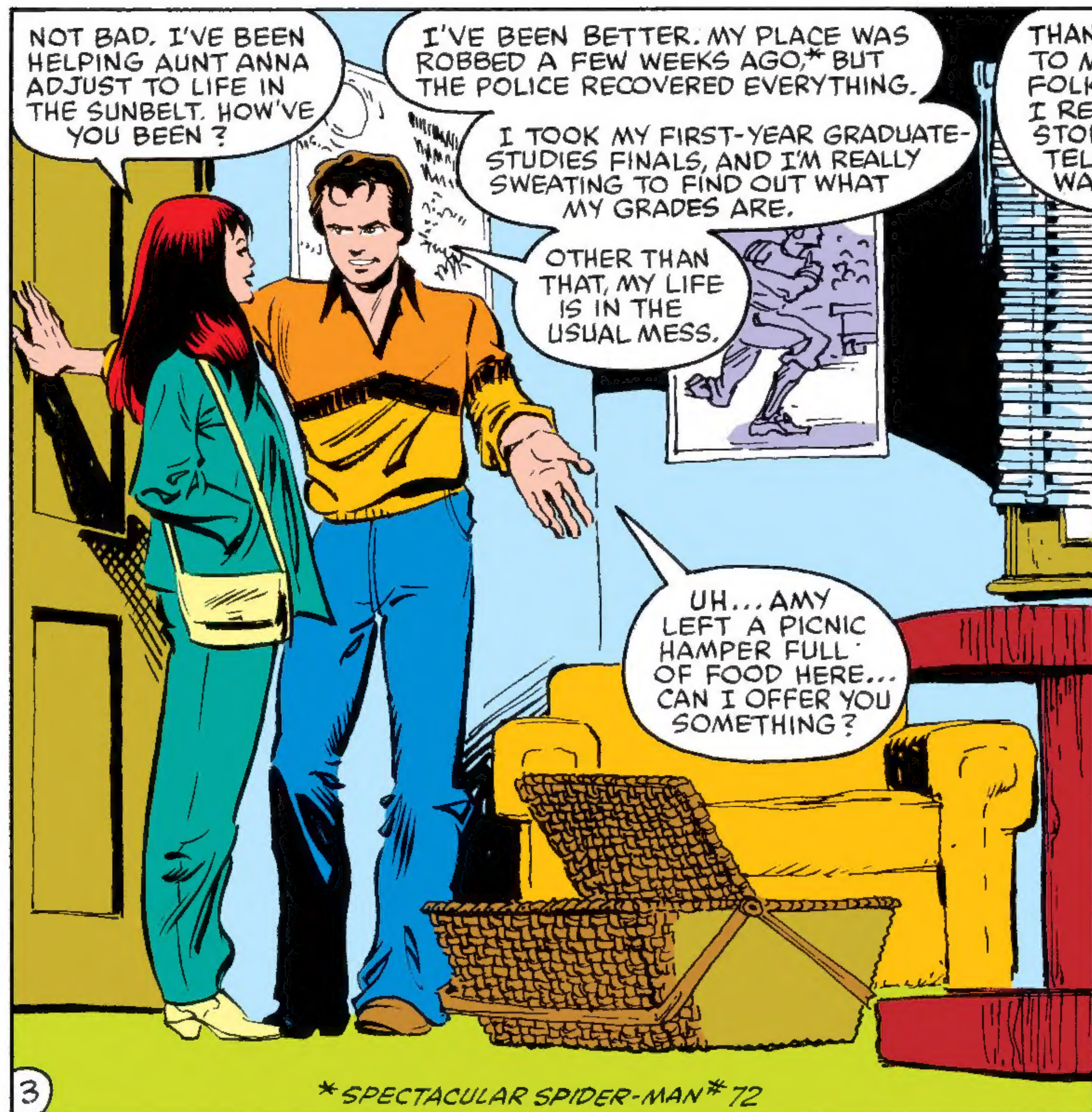
INSTEAD, I GOT CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE.



THIS LANCE BANNON MUST BE A PRETTY GOOD FRIEND.

ARE YOU KIDDING? HE'S MY BIGGEST COMPETITOR WHEN IT COMES TO SELLING PHOTOS TO THE DAILY BUGLE! I DIDN'T EVEN LIKE THE GUY MUCH UNTIL...WELL... HE'S OKAY, BUT...

...AW, THE HECK WITH HIM! HOW ARE YOU?



NOT BAD. I'VE BEEN HELPING AUNT ANNA ADJUST TO LIFE IN THE SUNBELT. HOW'VE YOU BEEN?

I'VE BEEN BETTER. MY PLACE WAS ROBBED A FEW WEEKS AGO,* BUT THE POLICE RECOVERED EVERYTHING.

I TOOK MY FIRST-YEAR GRADUATE-STUDIES FINALS, AND I'M REALLY SWEATING TO FIND OUT WHAT MY GRADES ARE.

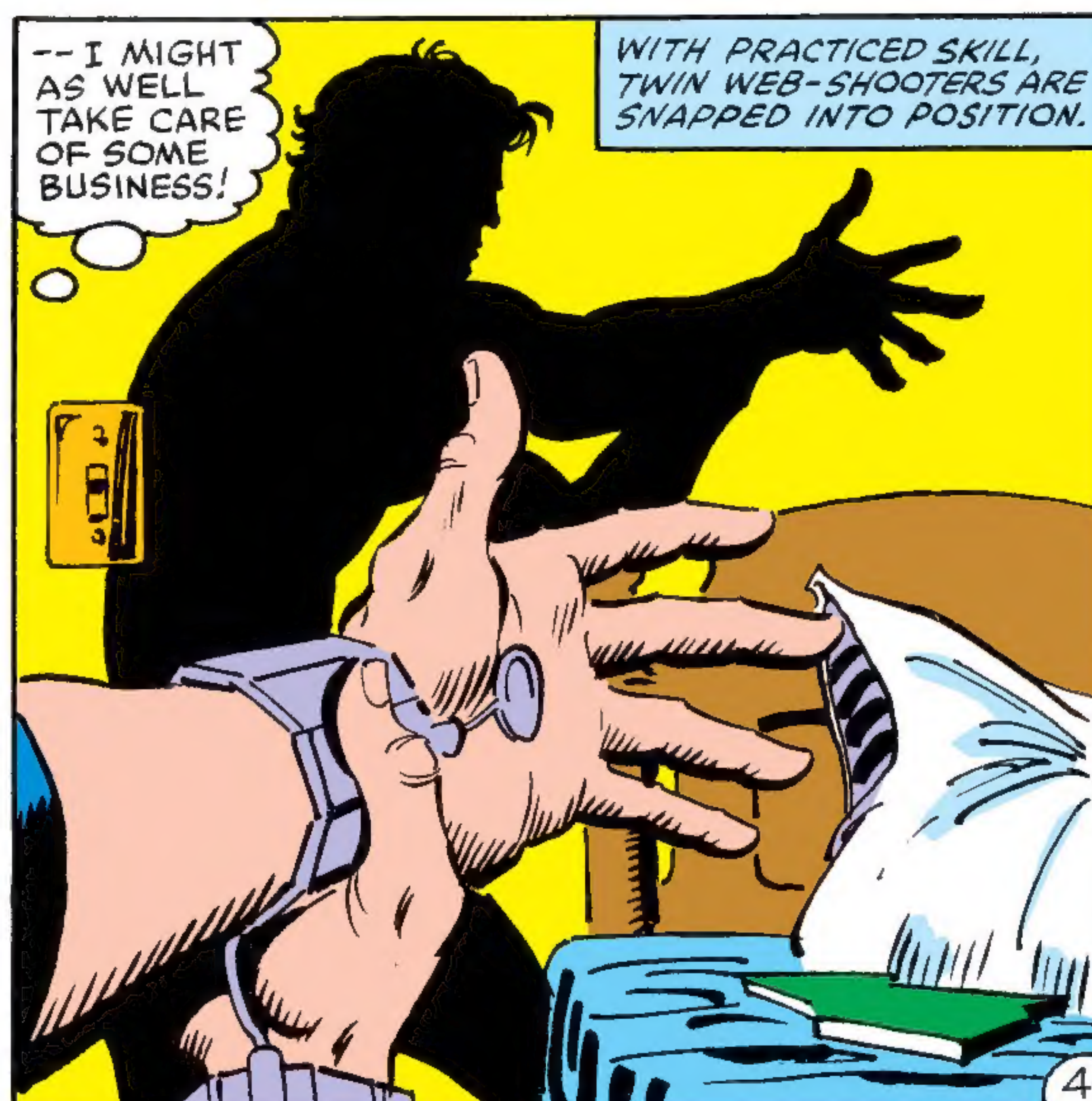
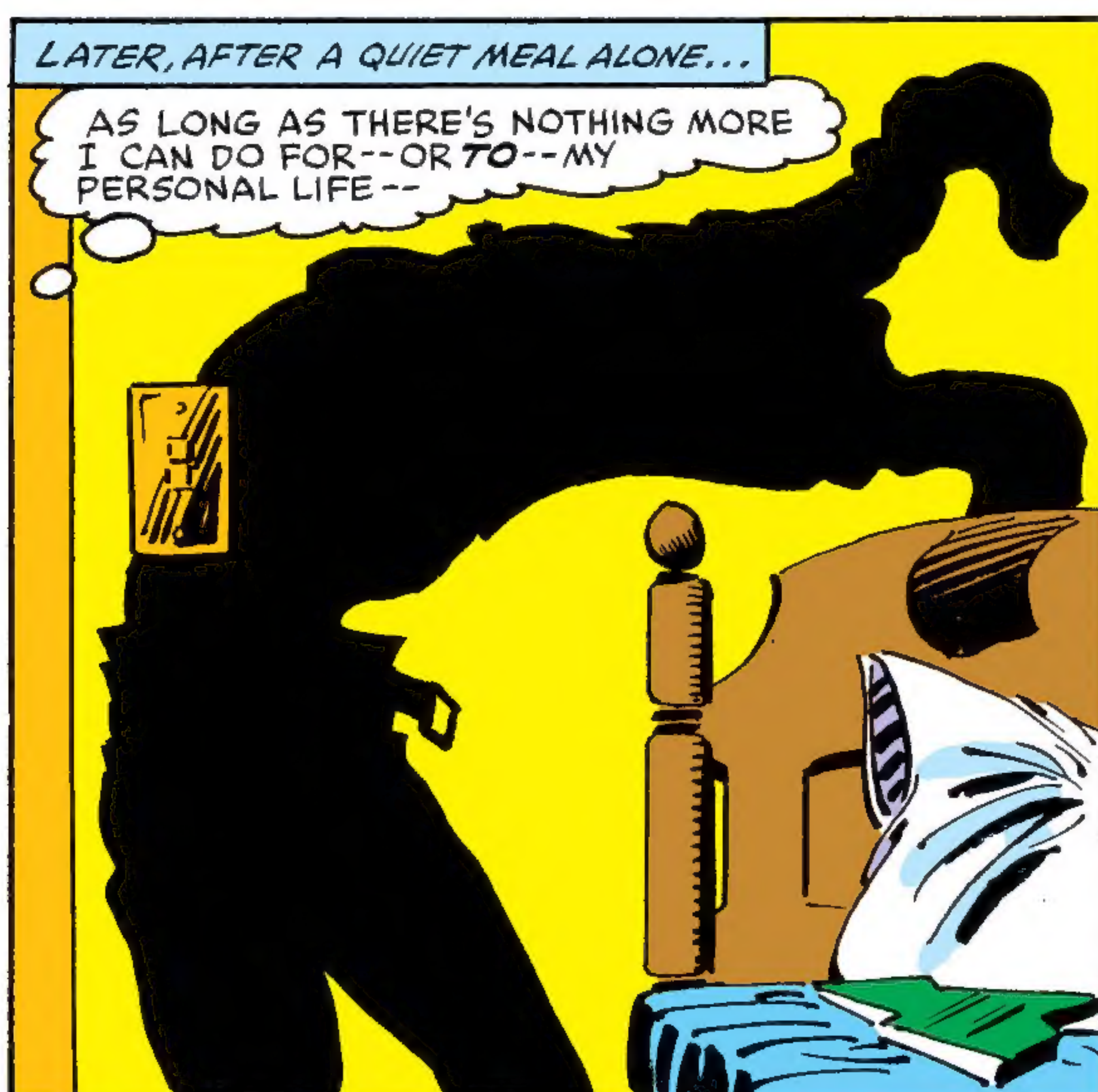
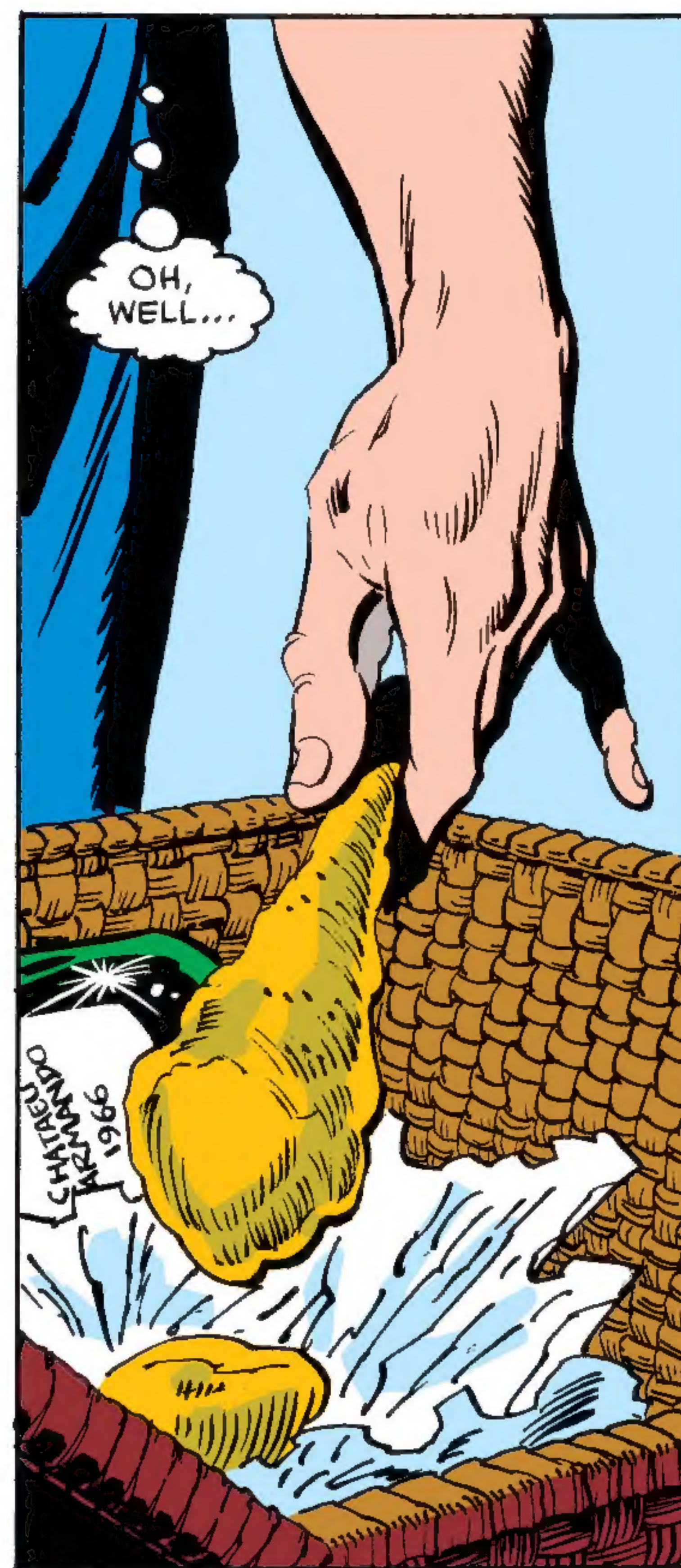
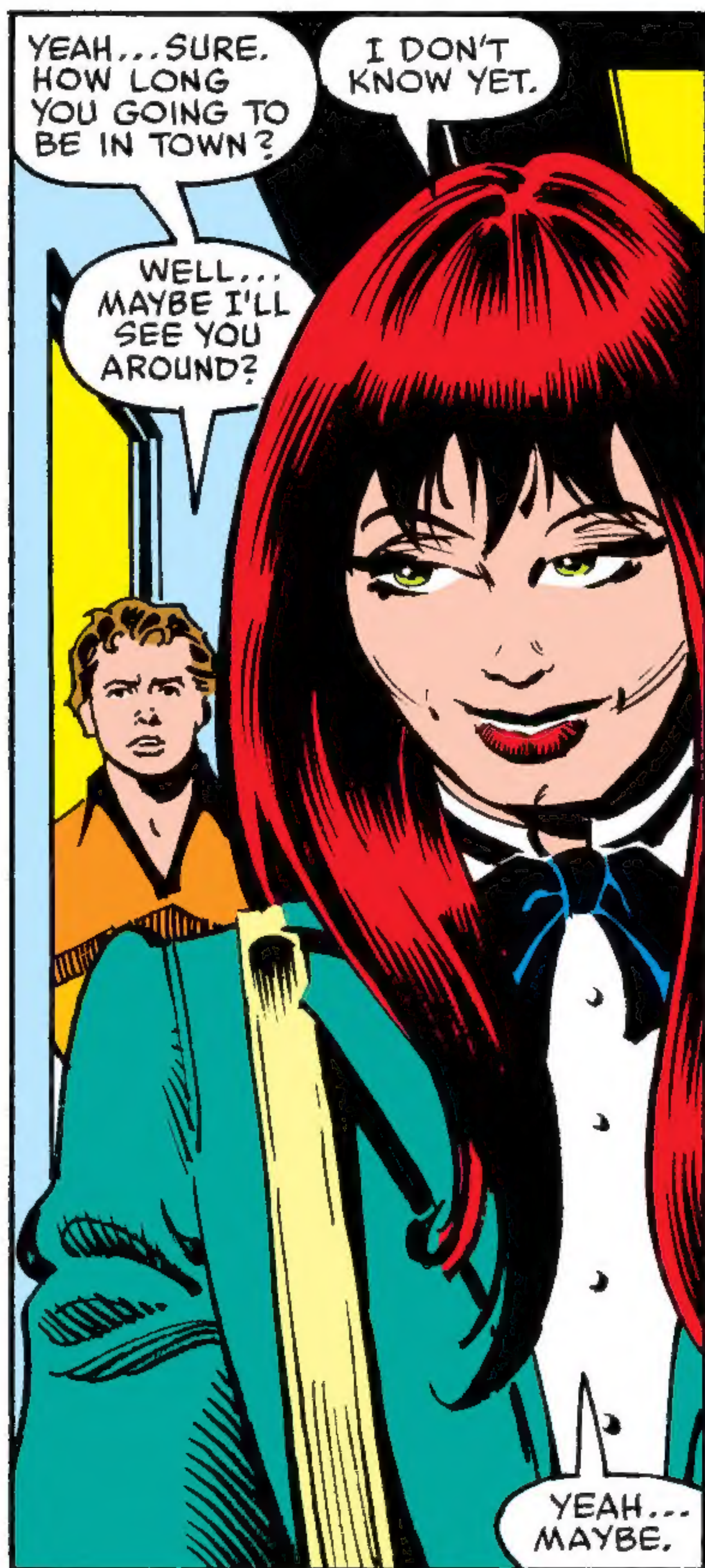
OTHER THAN THAT, MY LIFE IS IN THE USUAL MESS.

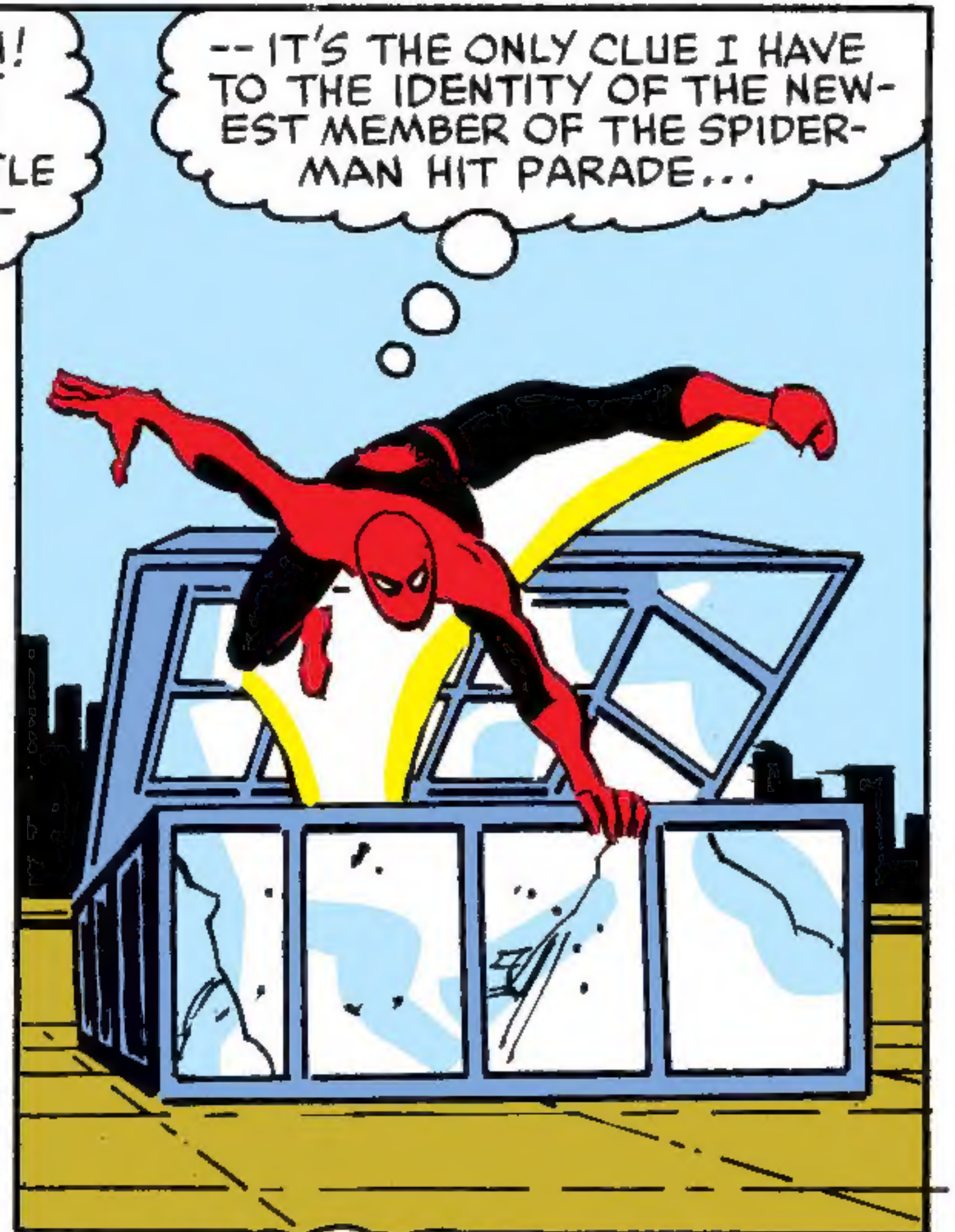
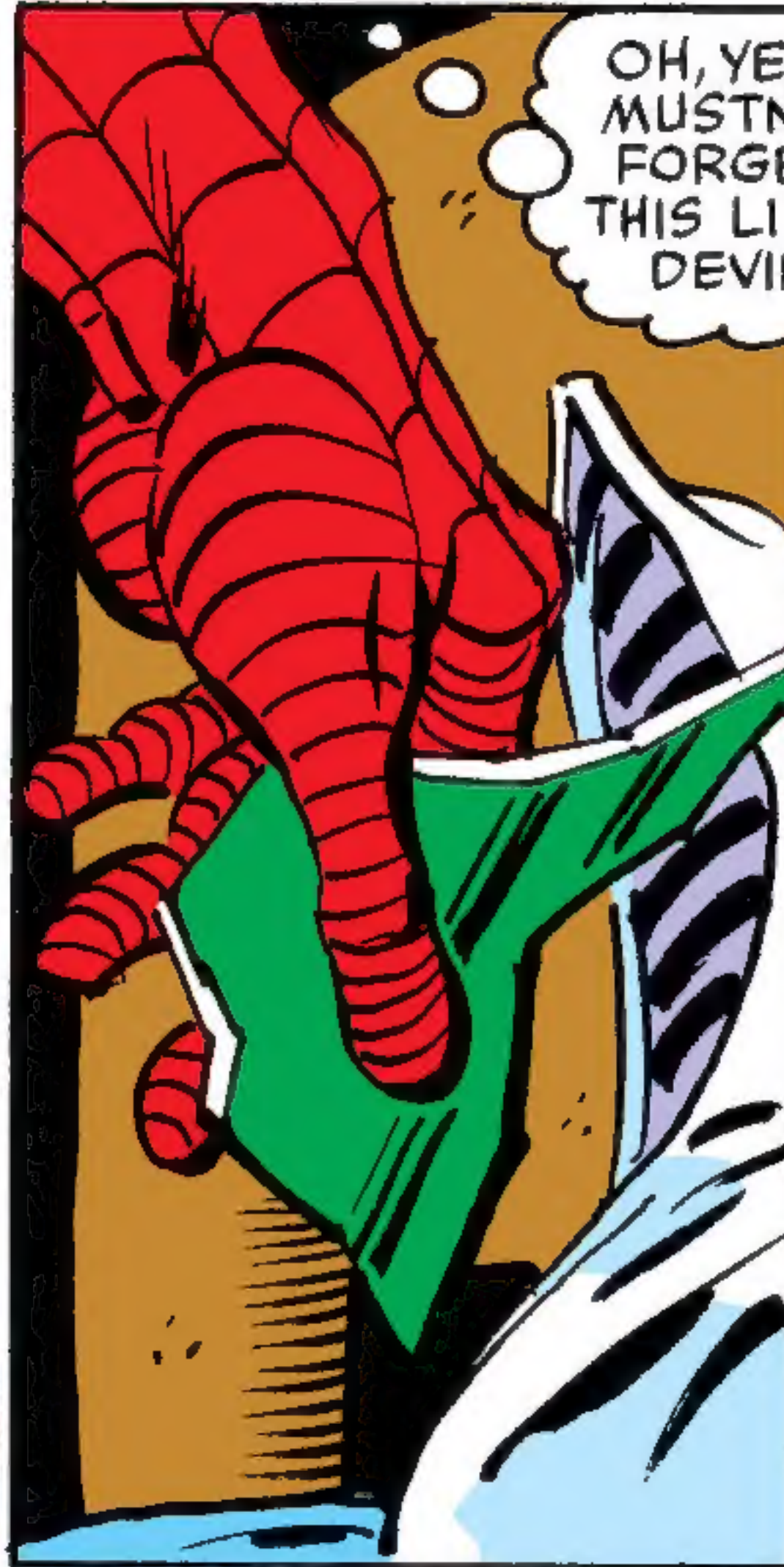
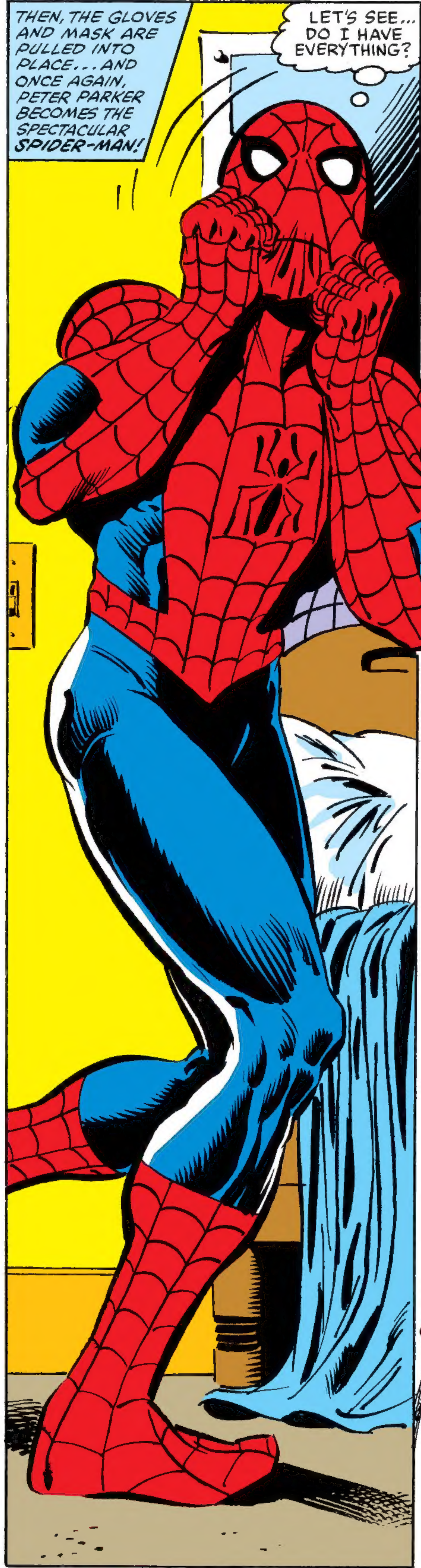
UH... AMY LEFT A PICNIC HAMPER FULL OF FOOD HERE... CAN I OFFER YOU SOMETHING?



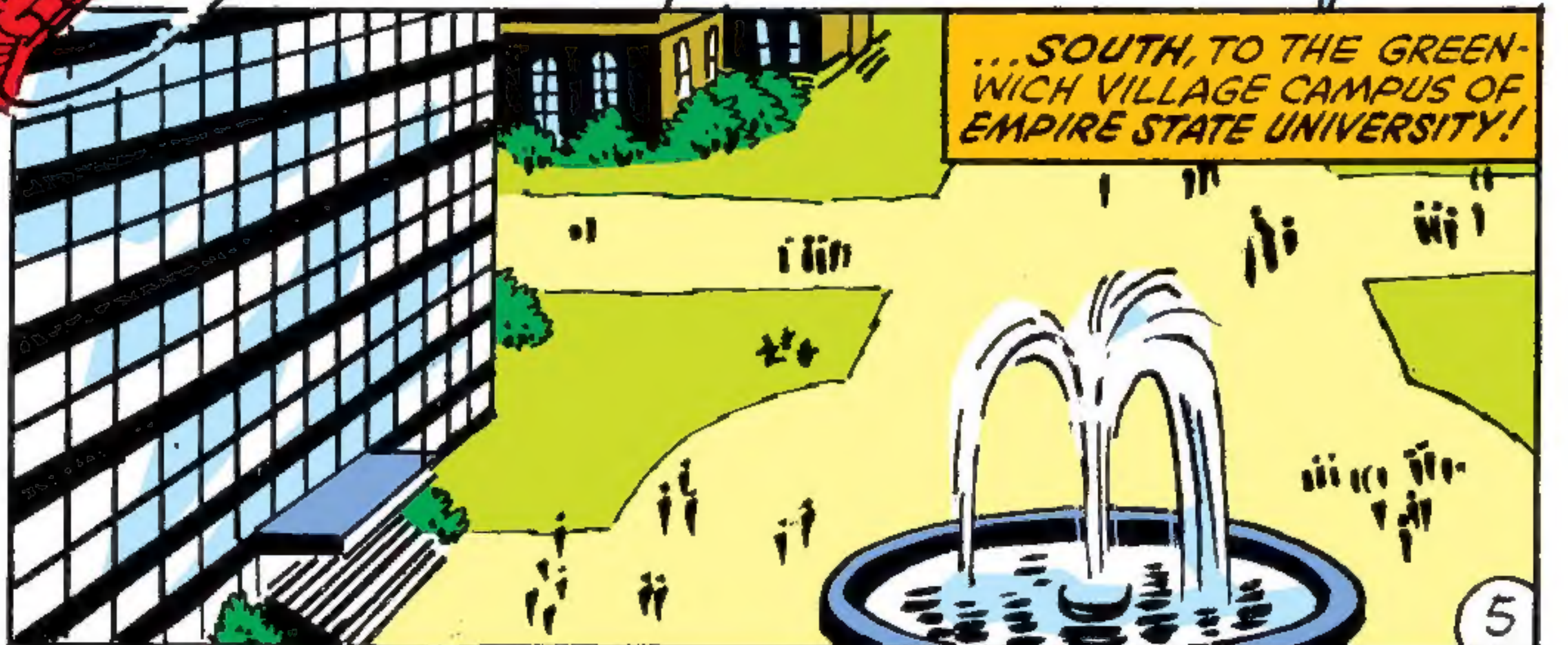
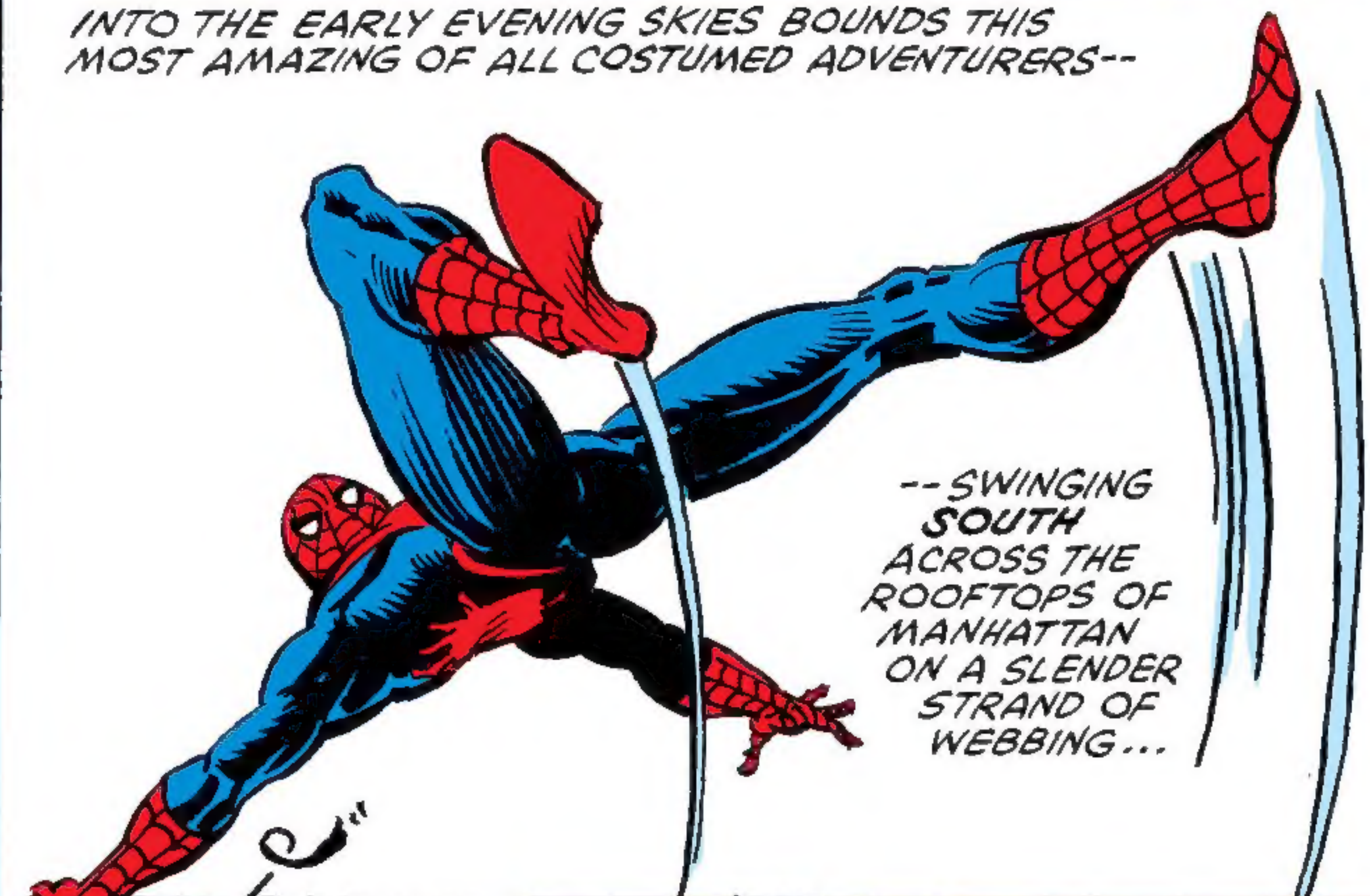
THANKS, BUT I HAVE TO MEET SOME FOLKS FOR DINNER! I REALLY JUST STOPPED BY TO TELL YOU I WAS BACK.

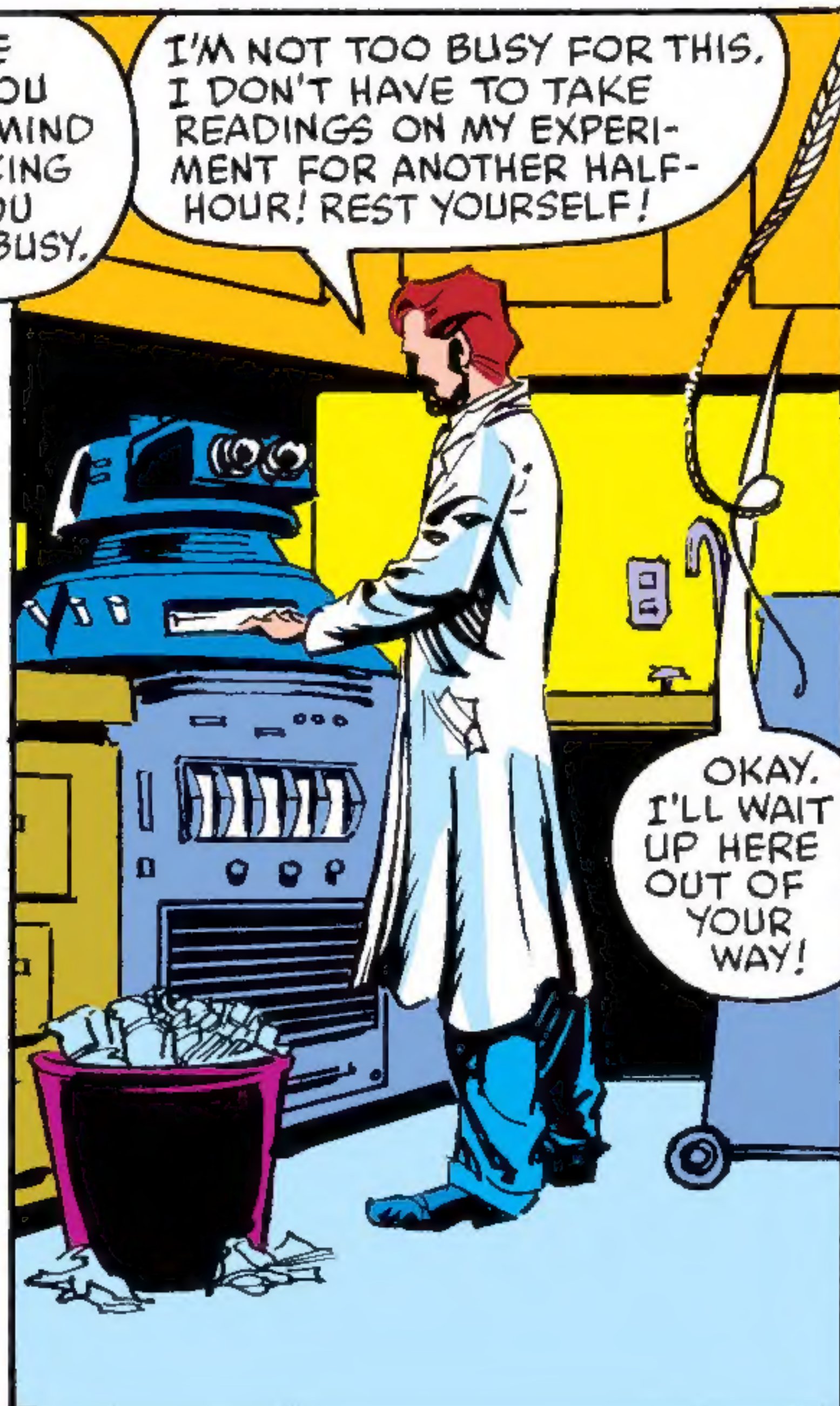
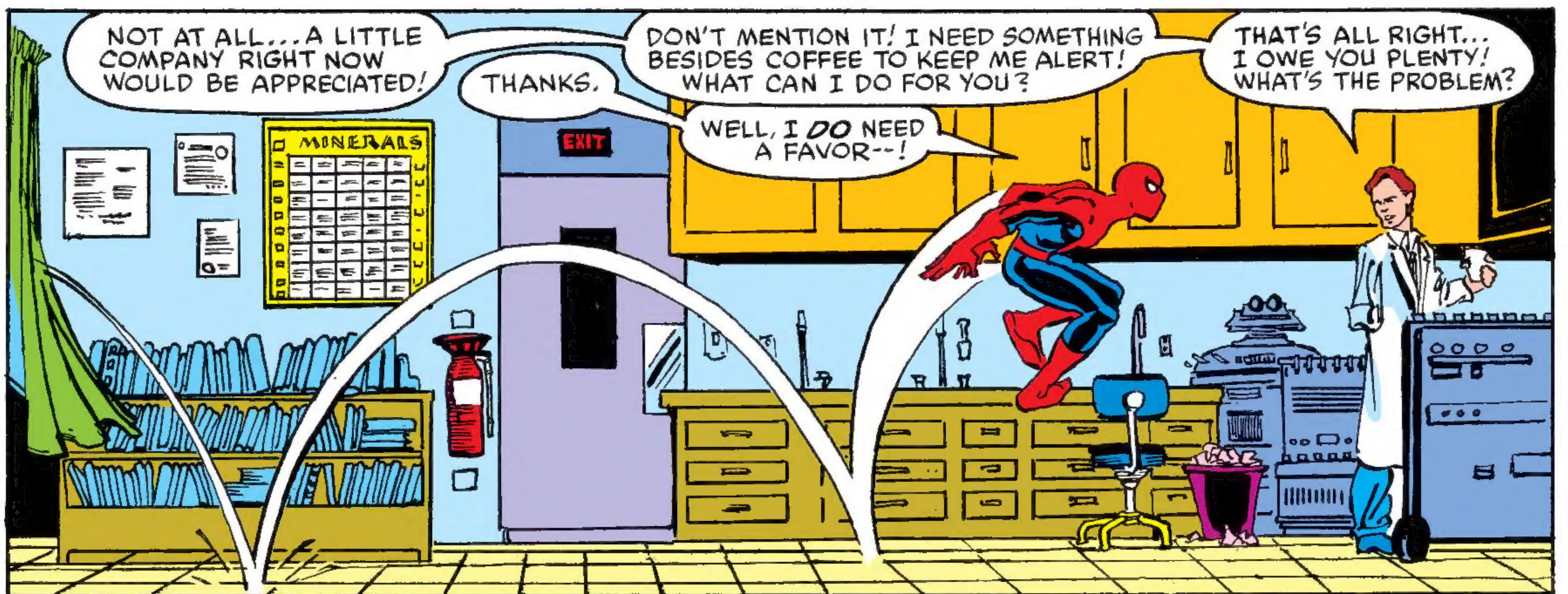
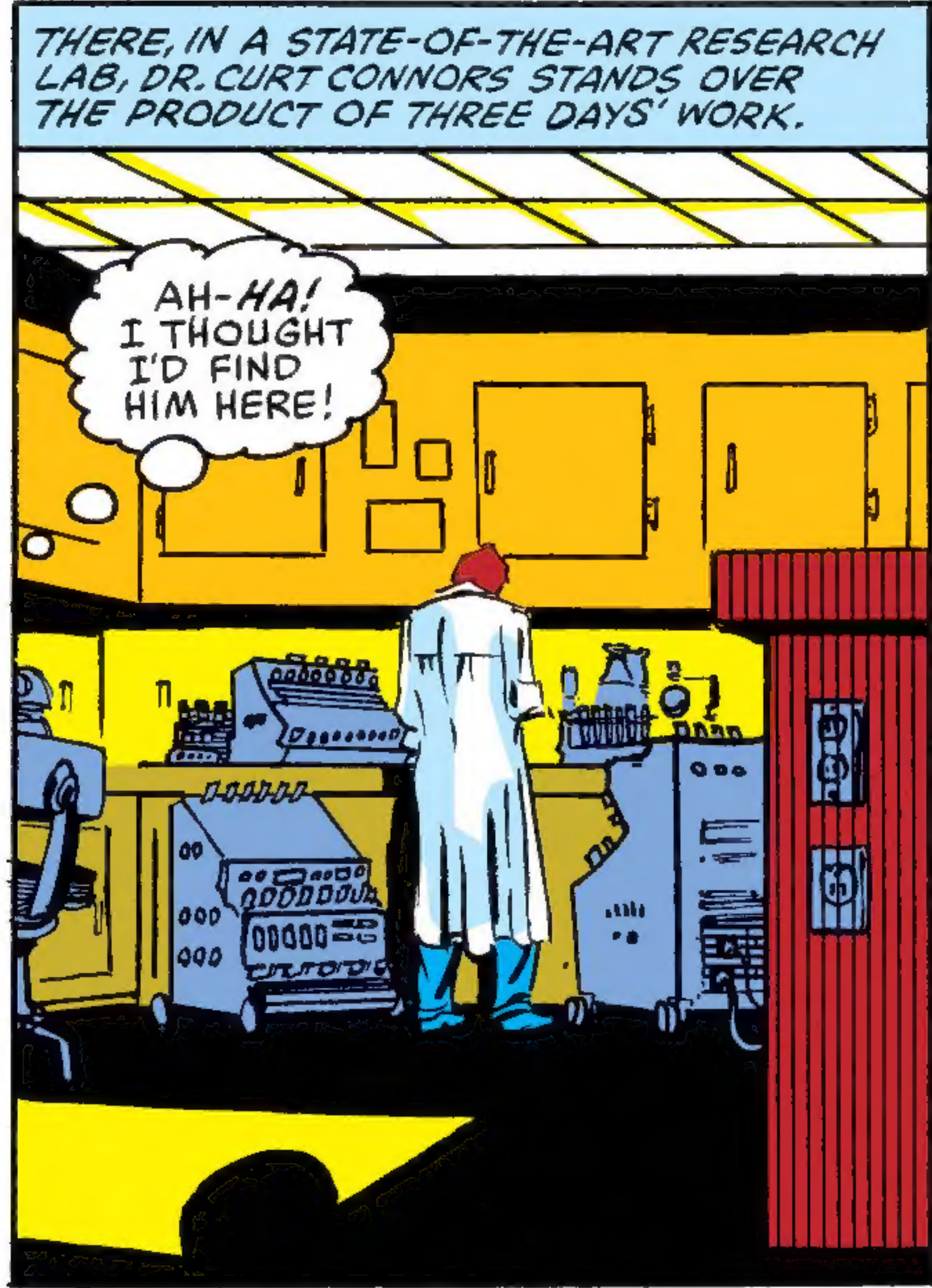
HERE...MAYBE YOU'D BETTER KEEP THIS!

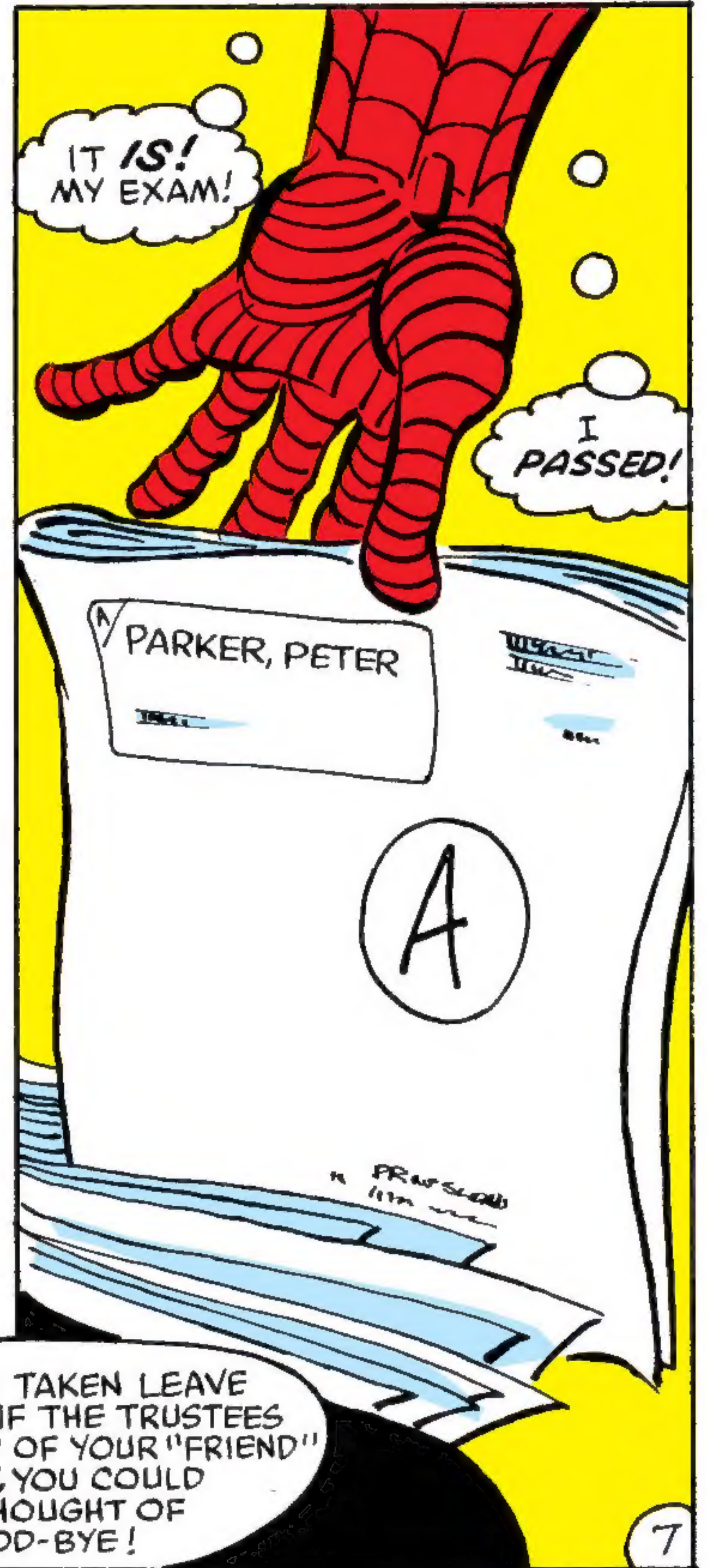
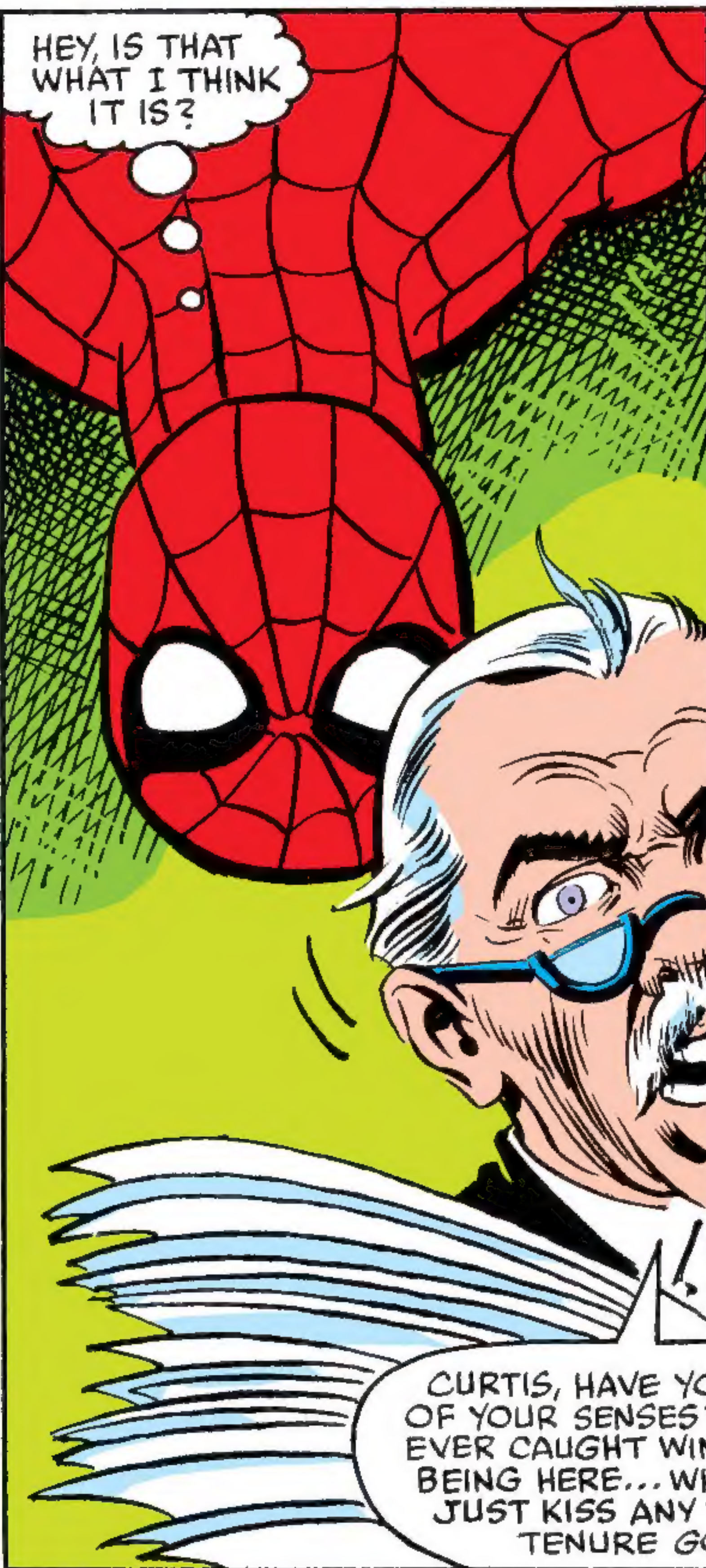
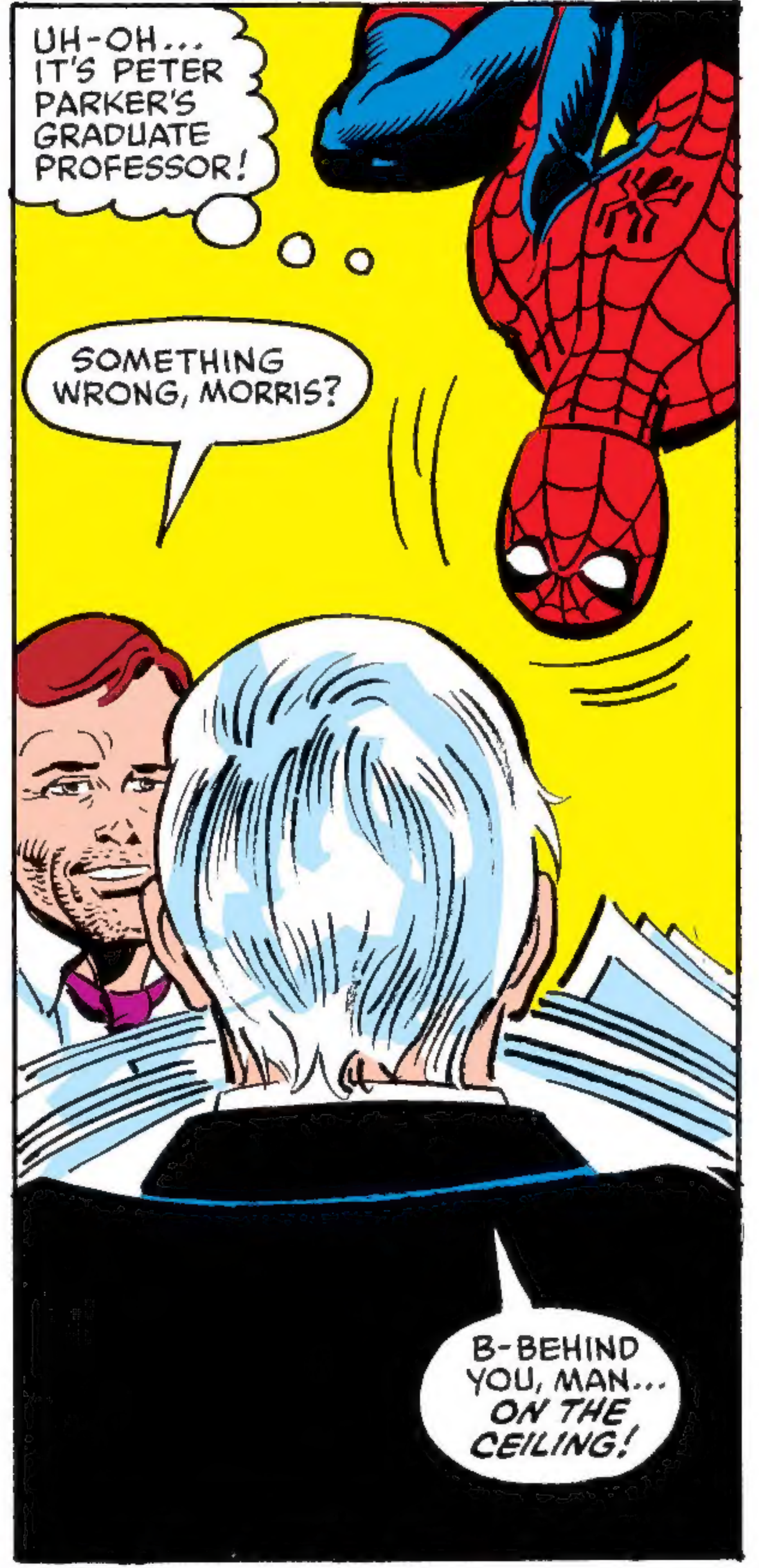
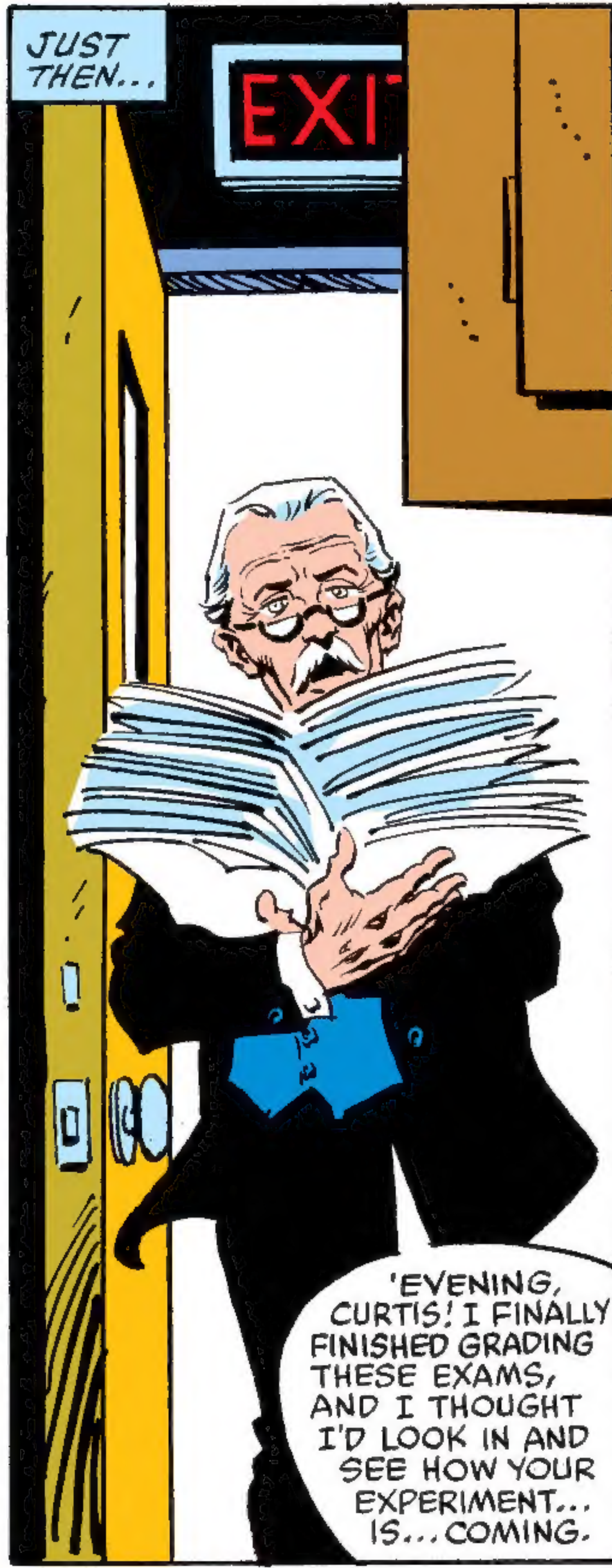


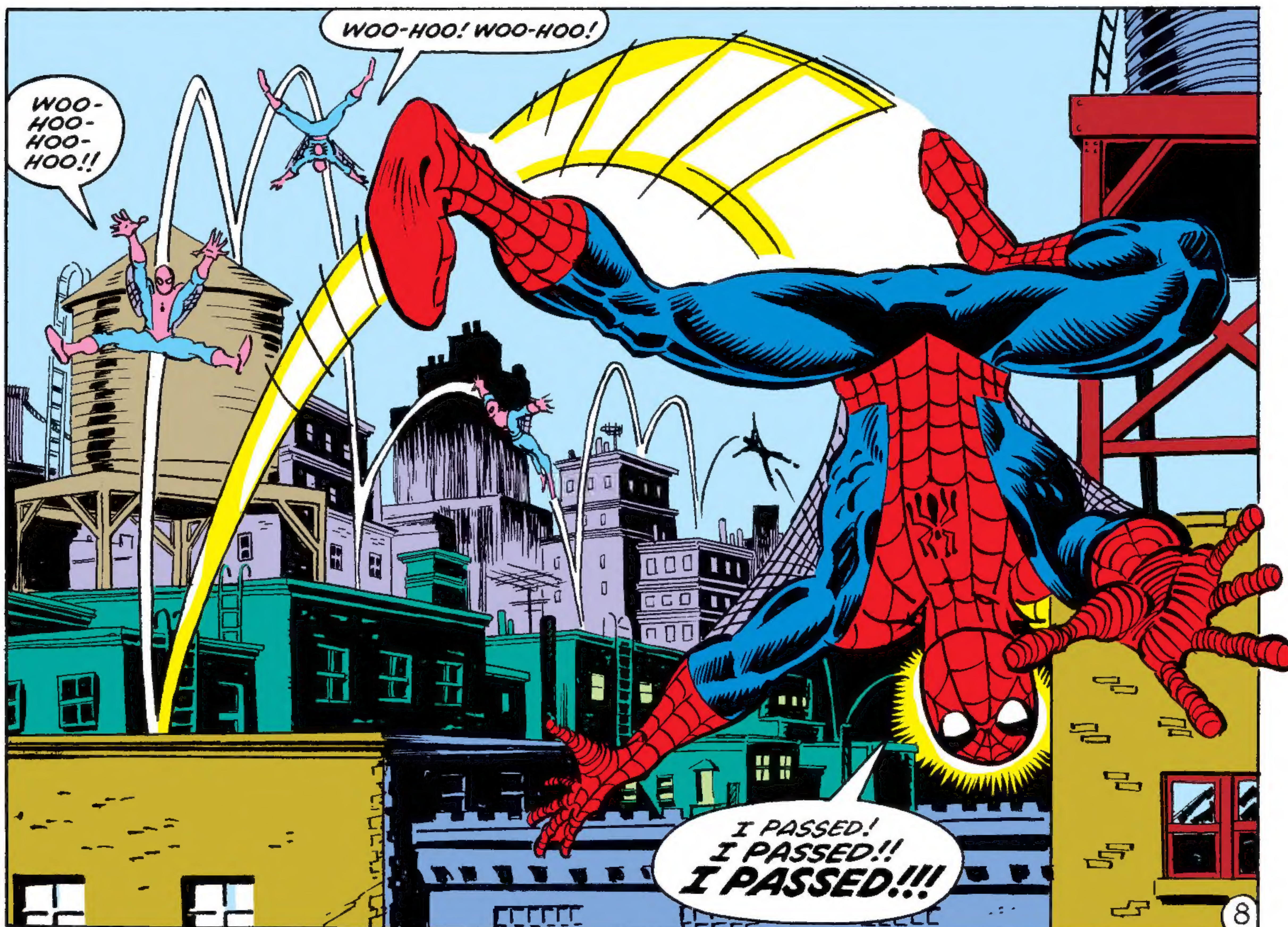
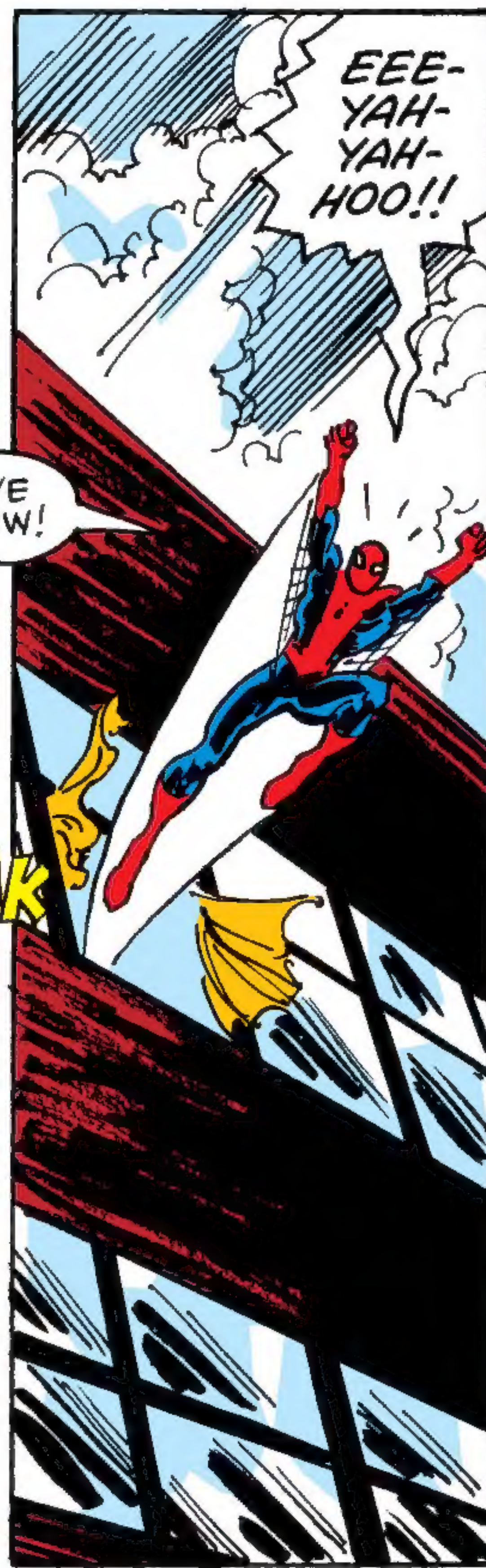
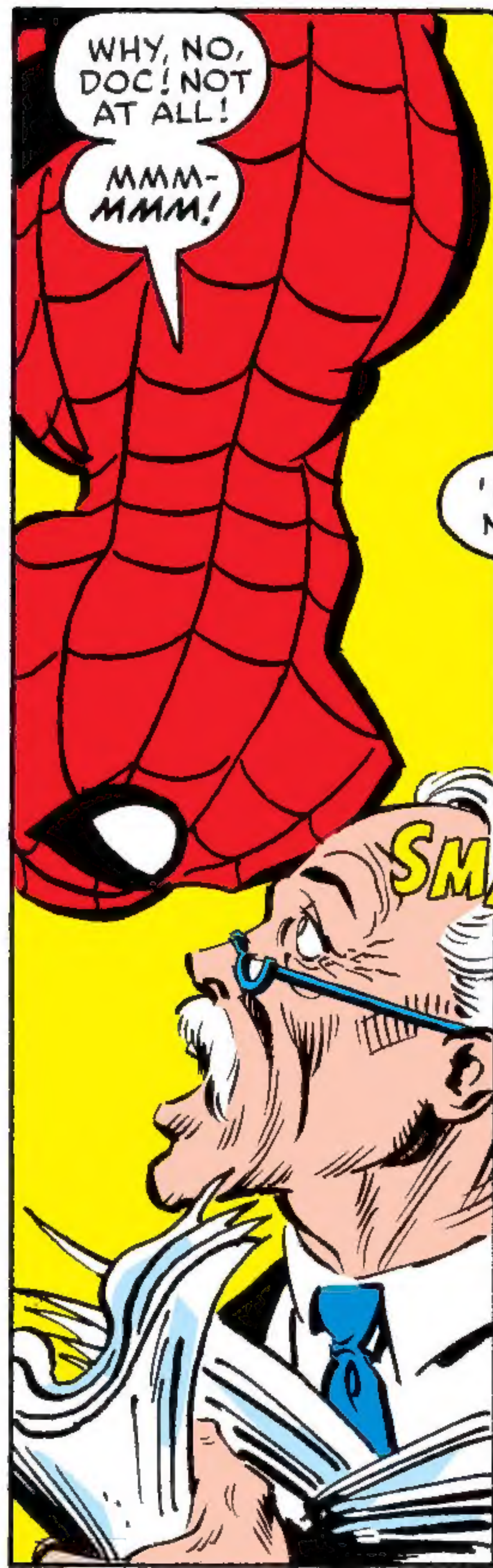
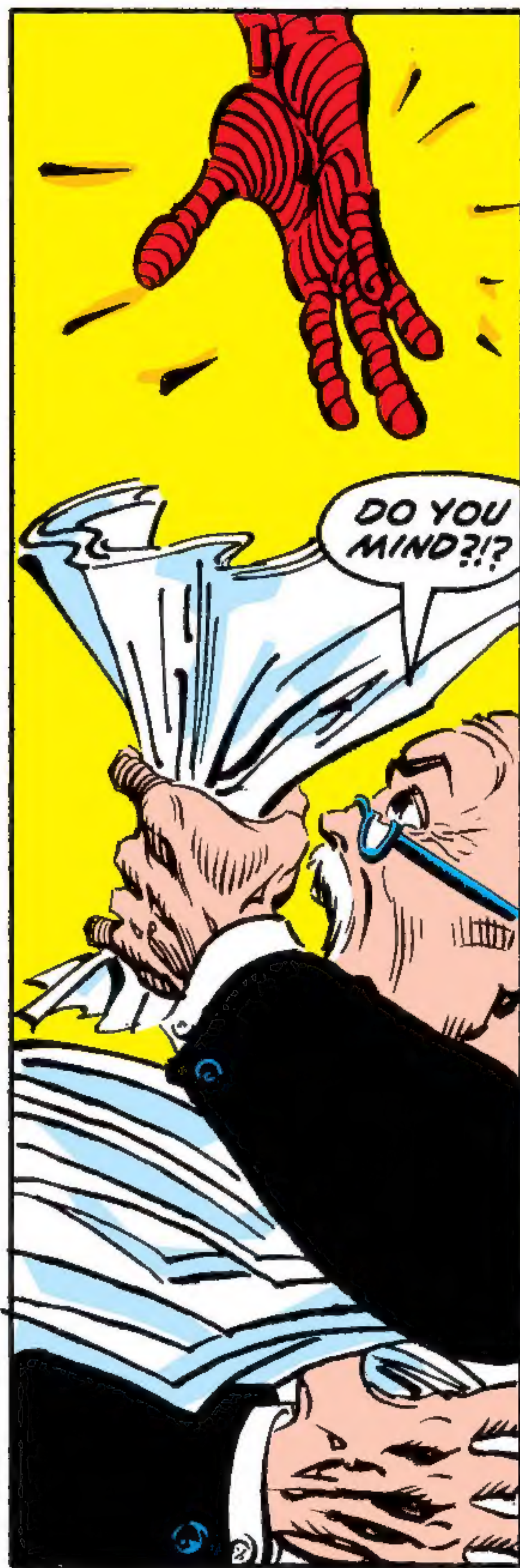


INTO THE EARLY EVENING SKIES BOUNDS THIS MOST AMAZING OF ALL COSTUMED ADVENTURERS--









MEANWHILE, IN A MIDTOWN MANHATTAN COFFEE SHOP...

I MAY BE A LITTLE THICK SOMETIMES, AMY, BUT IT DIDN'T TAKE A GENIUS TO KNOW YOU WERE PLAYING UP TO PARKER JUST TO GET UNDER MY SKIN. RIGHT?

UH-HUH... JUST LIKE YOU DID BY SEEING SHEILA, AND ALMA, AND-- WHAT WAS HER NAME?-- BINKY?

YEAH... LOOKS LIKE WE'VE REALLY GOT EACH OTHER'S NUMBER. I HAVE MORE TO ANSWER FOR, PROBABLY. YOU KNOW, I KEPT HOPING I'D MAKE YOU MAD ENOUGH TO DO SOMETHING.

I GUESS YOU DID.

I'VE NEVER BEEN THAT GOOD WITH WORDS, AMY. I WAS... WELL... AFRAID I'D SCARE YOU OFF IF I CAME OUT AND TOLD YOU HOW... HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU.

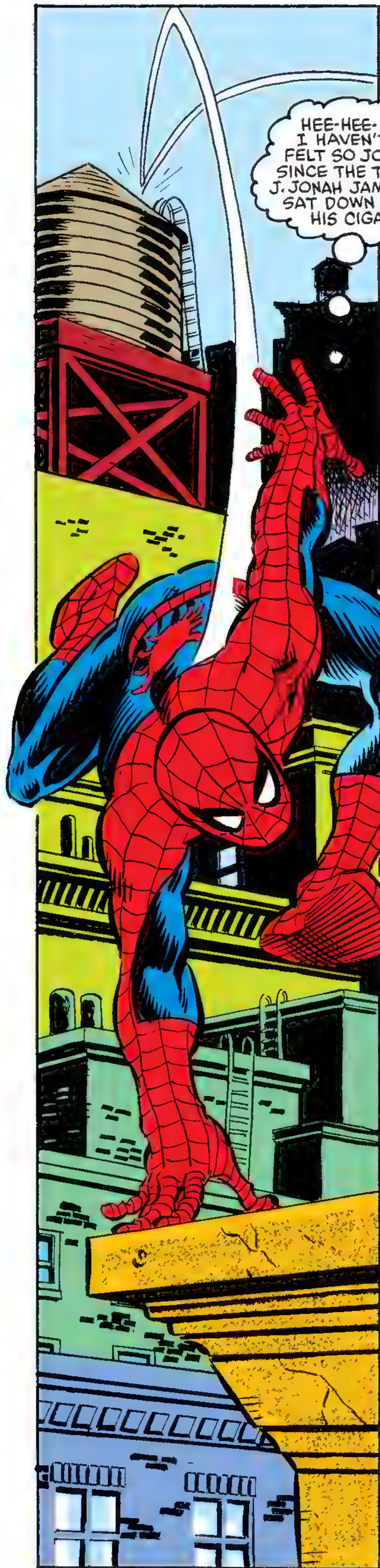
PRETTY STUPID, HUH?

I'D SAY WE'VE BOTH BEEN PRETTY STUPID, LANCE.

ELSEWHERE...

THINGS LOOK SWELL, THINGS LOOK GREAT! GONNA HAVE THE WHOLE WORLD ON A PLATE!

I WISH I'D GOTTEN A PICTURE OF SLOAN AS I KISSED HIM! THE EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE WAS PRICELESS!



HEE-HEE-HEE!
I HAVEN'T
FELT SO JOLLY
SINCE THE TIME
J. JONAH JAMESON
SAT DOWN ON
HIS CIGAR!



IT'S SUCH A RELIEF TO
KNOW THAT I ACED THAT
FINAL! WITH THE NOSE-
DIVE MY STUDIES HAD
TAKEN, THAT GRADE REAL-
LY SAVED MY SKIN!



IN FACT, IT SHOULD RAISE MY GRADE-
POINT AVERAGE ENOUGH FOR ME TO
STAY IN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM
AND
AVOID
ACADEMIC
PROBATION!

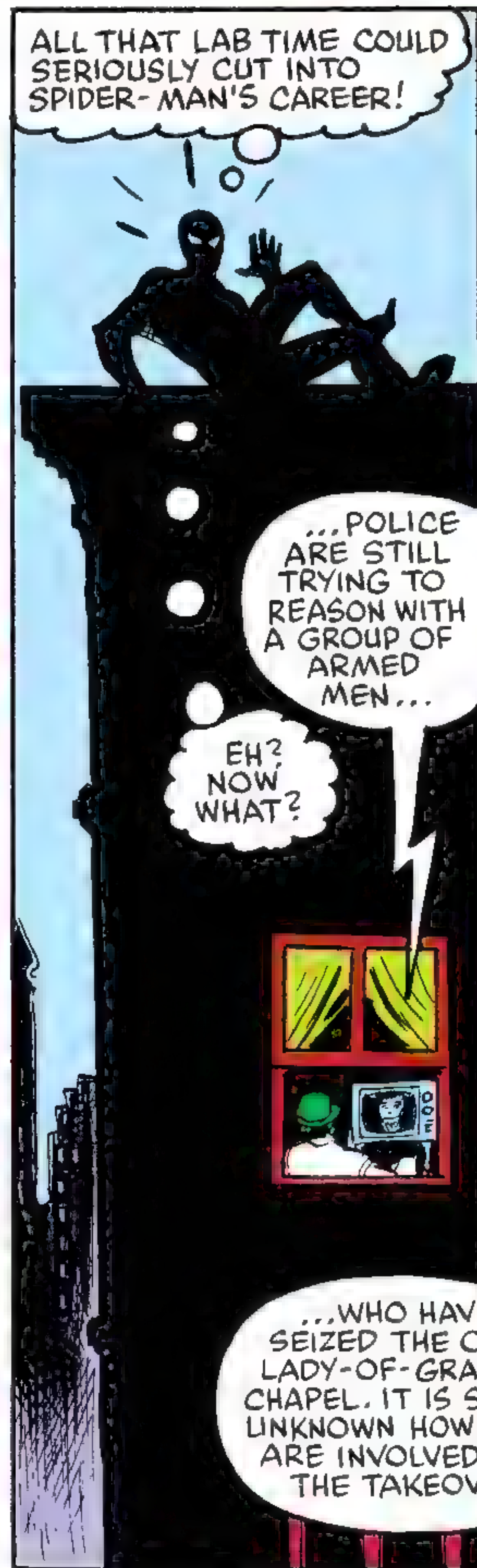
SECOND
YEAR
STUDIES,
HERE I
COME!



SECOND YEAR...
YEAH. FROM
WHAT I HEAR,
IT'S EVEN MORE
RUGGED THAN
THE FIRST.

I'LL HAVE TO PICK A
TOPIC FOR MY DIS-
SERTATION... AND DO
A LOT MORE RESEARCH.
I'VE SEEN SOME GUYS
WHO'VE PRACTICALLY
LIVED IN THE LAB
THEIR SECOND YEAR.

HECK, DOC CONNORS
STILL SEES MORE OF
THE LAB THAN HE DOES
OF HIS WIFE AND KID!

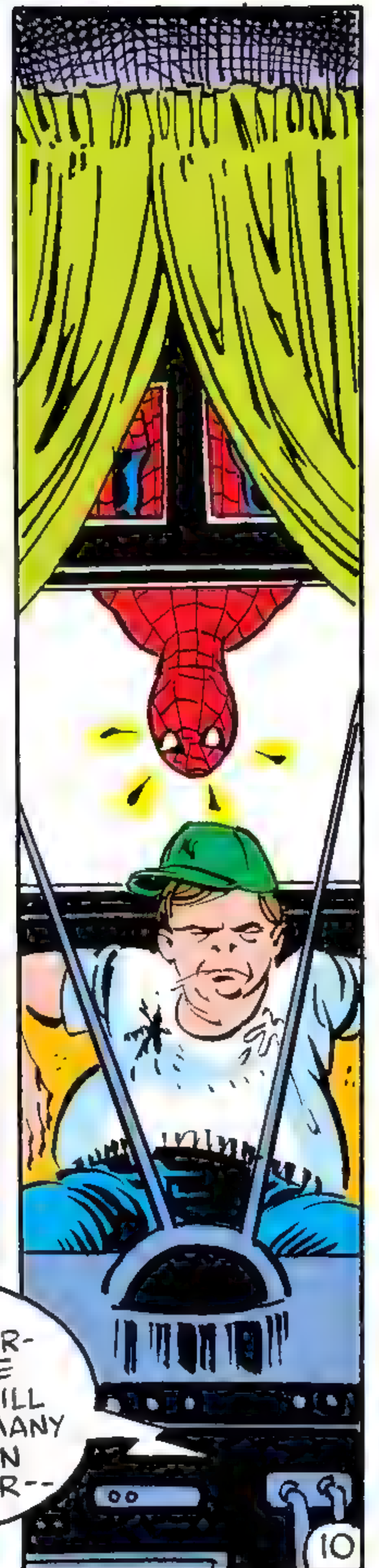


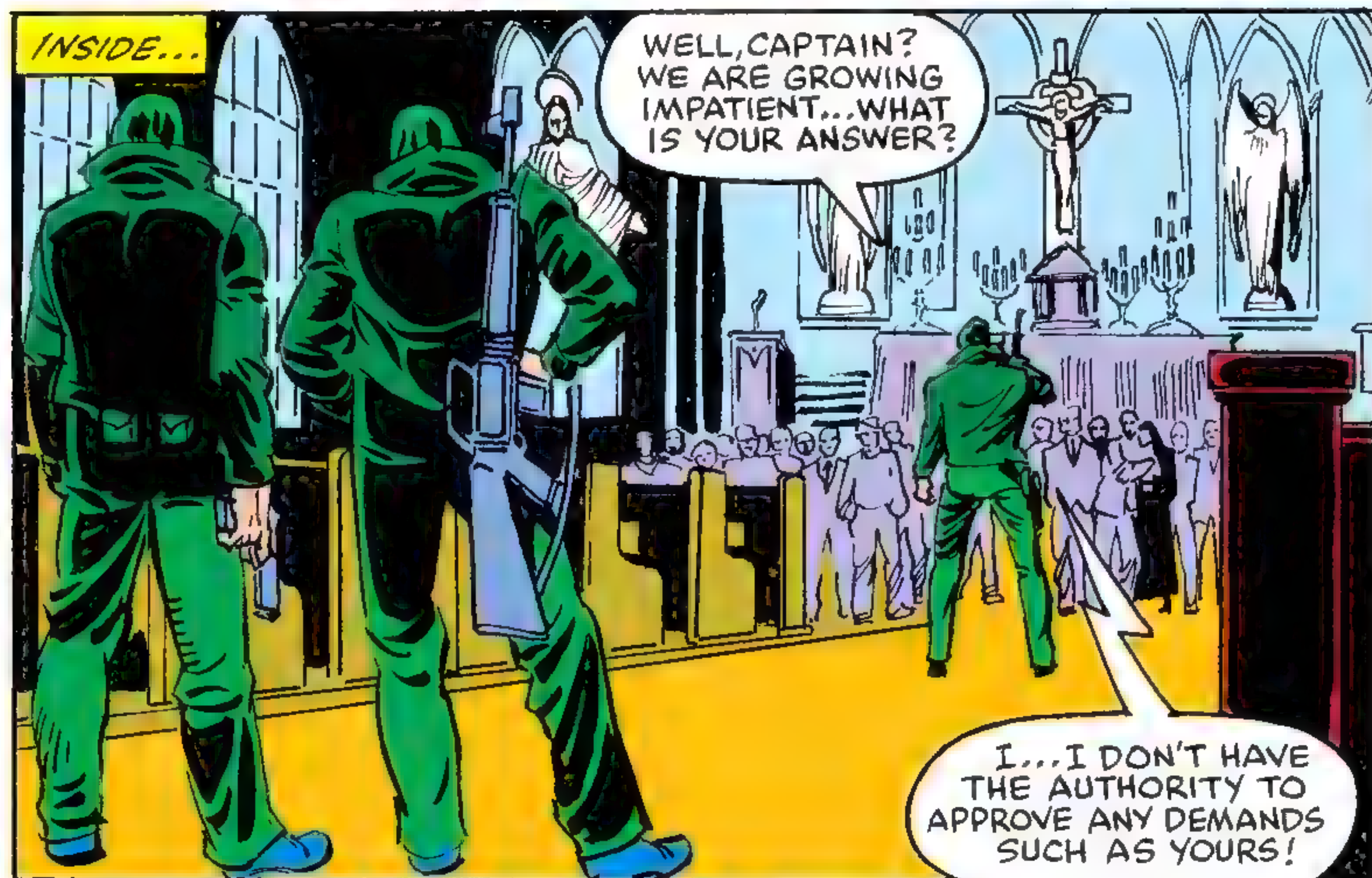
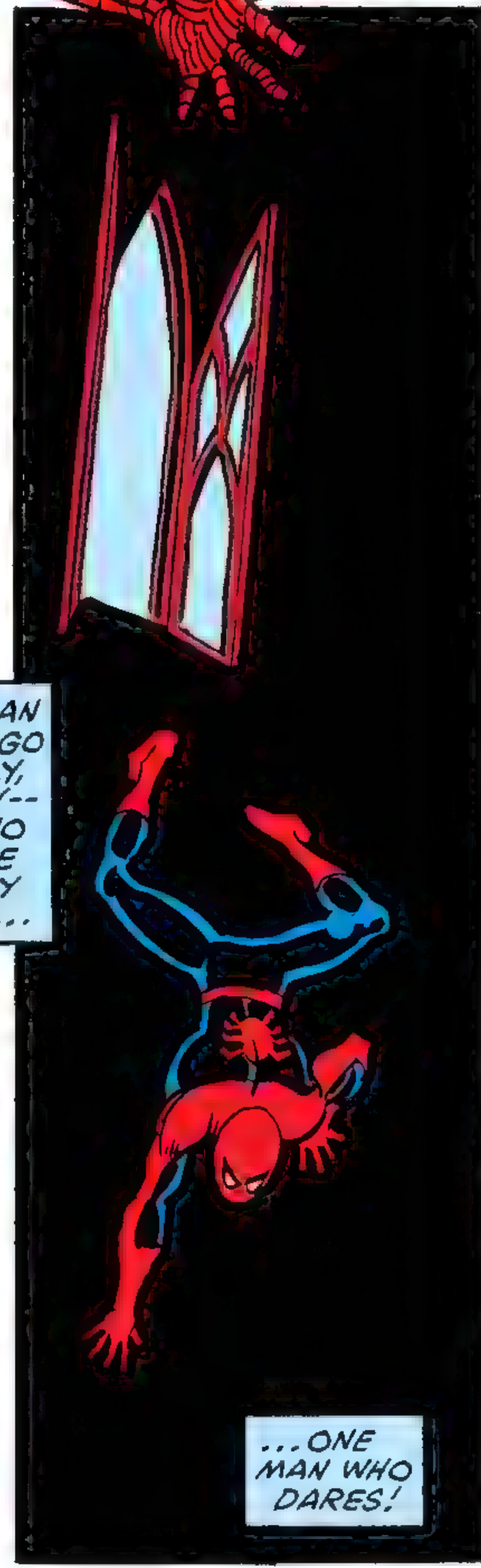
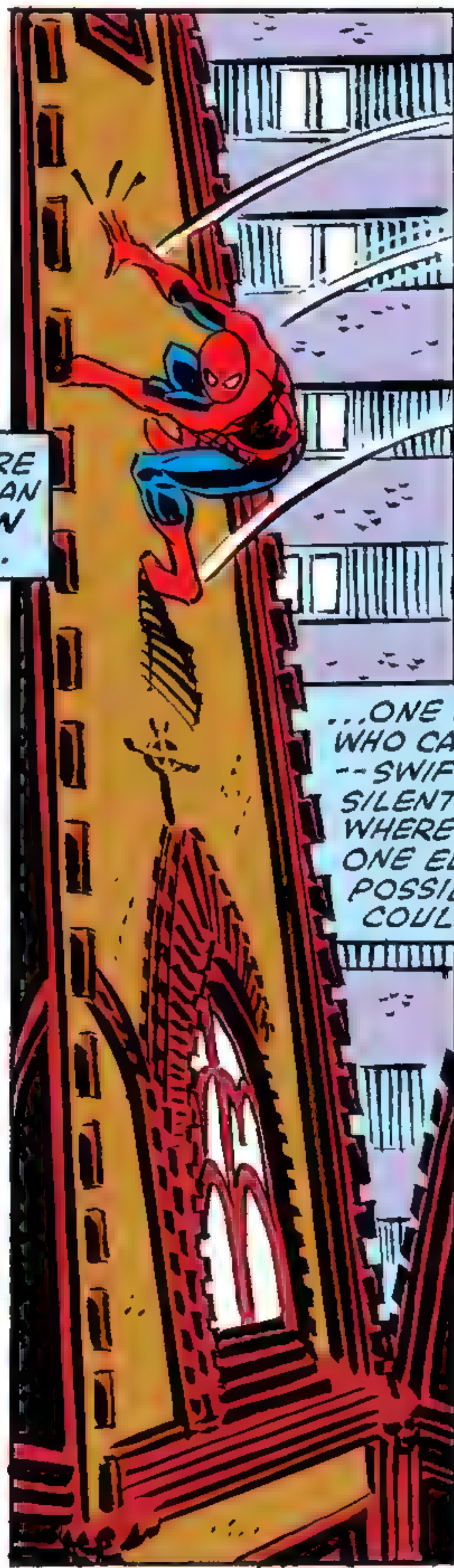
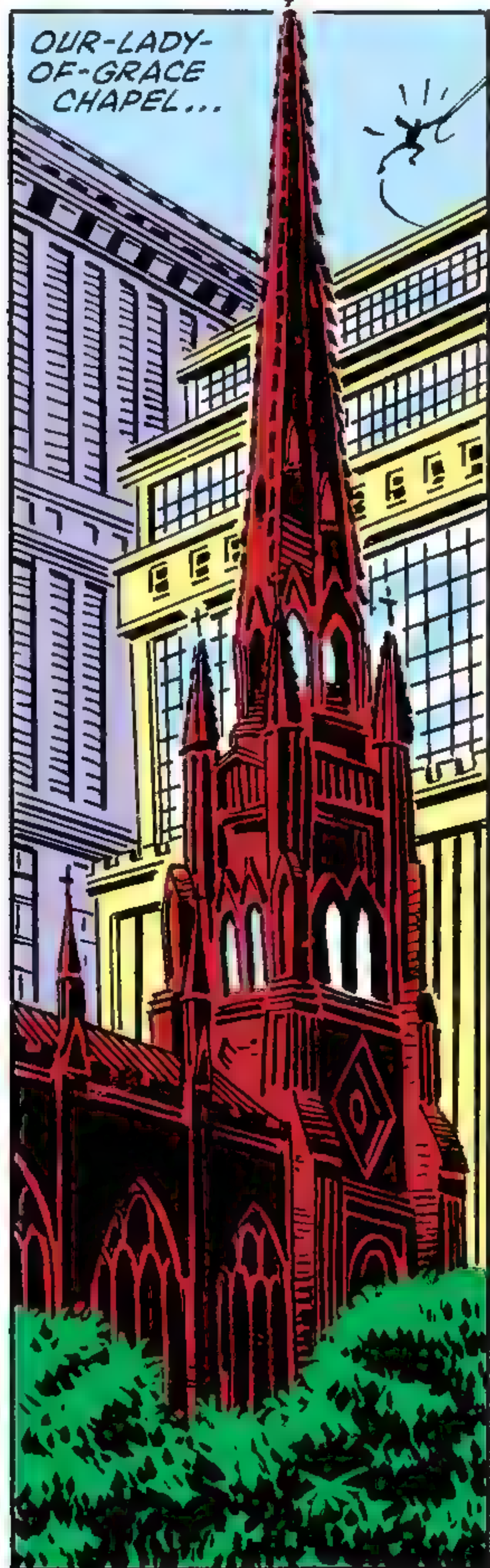
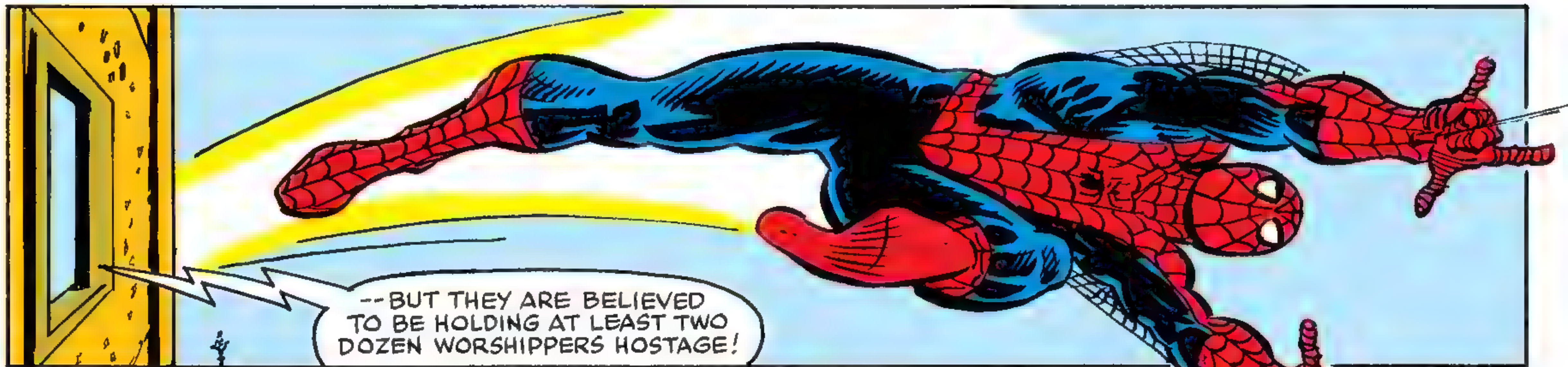
ALL THAT LAB TIME COULD
SERIOUSLY CUT INTO
SPIDER-MAN'S CAREER!

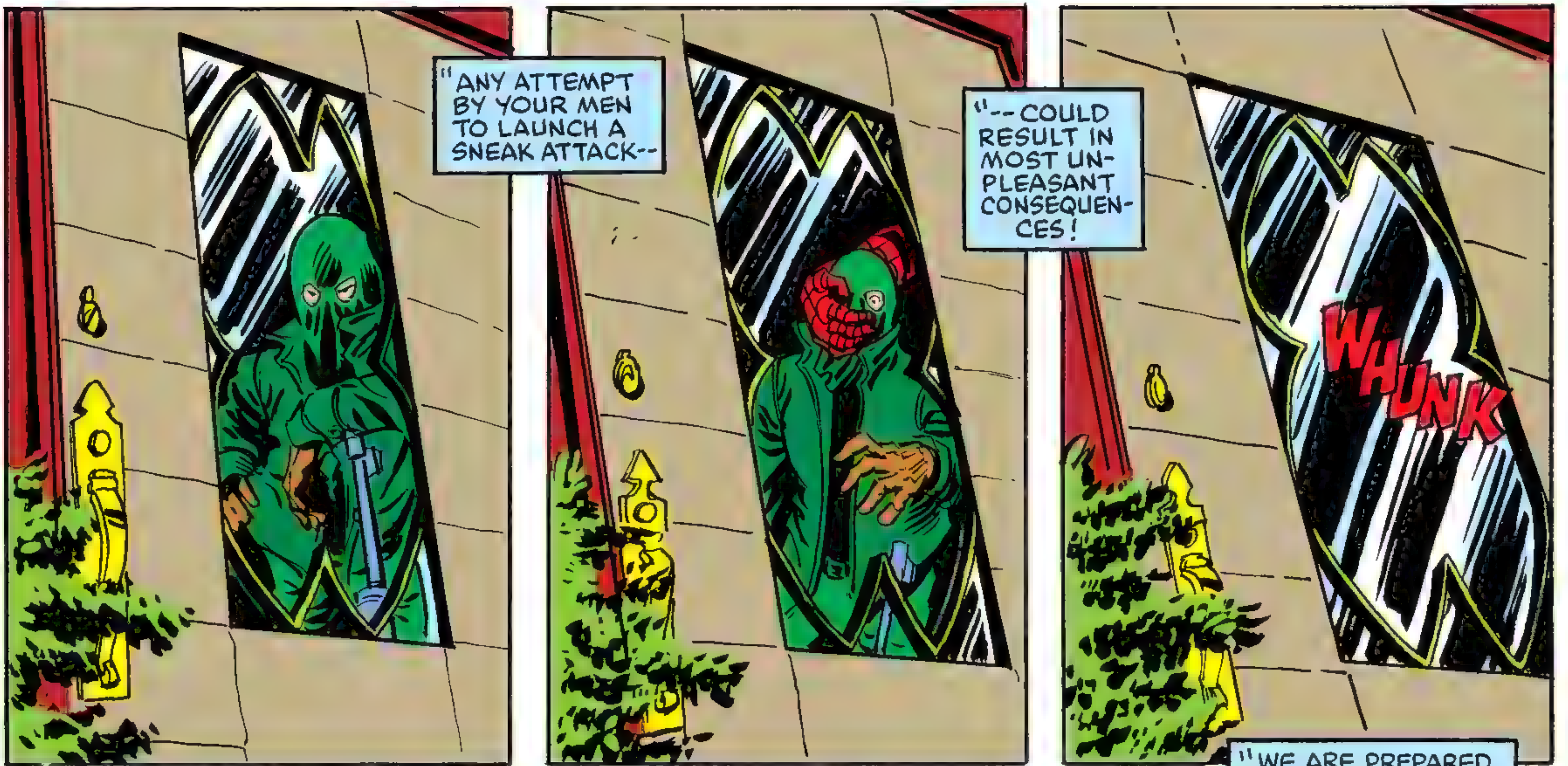
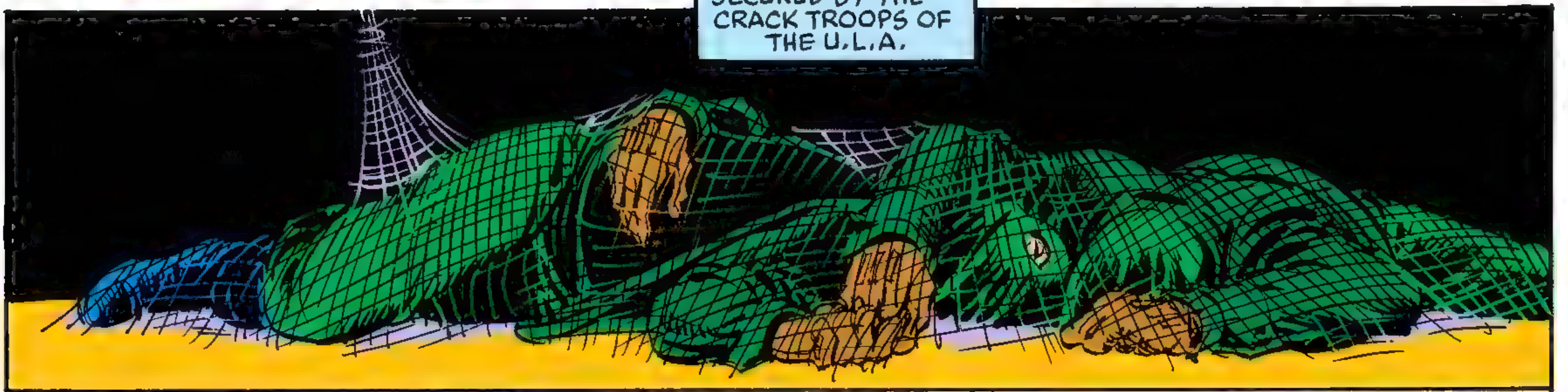
...POLICE
ARE STILL
TRYING TO
REASON WITH
A GROUP OF
ARMED
MEN...

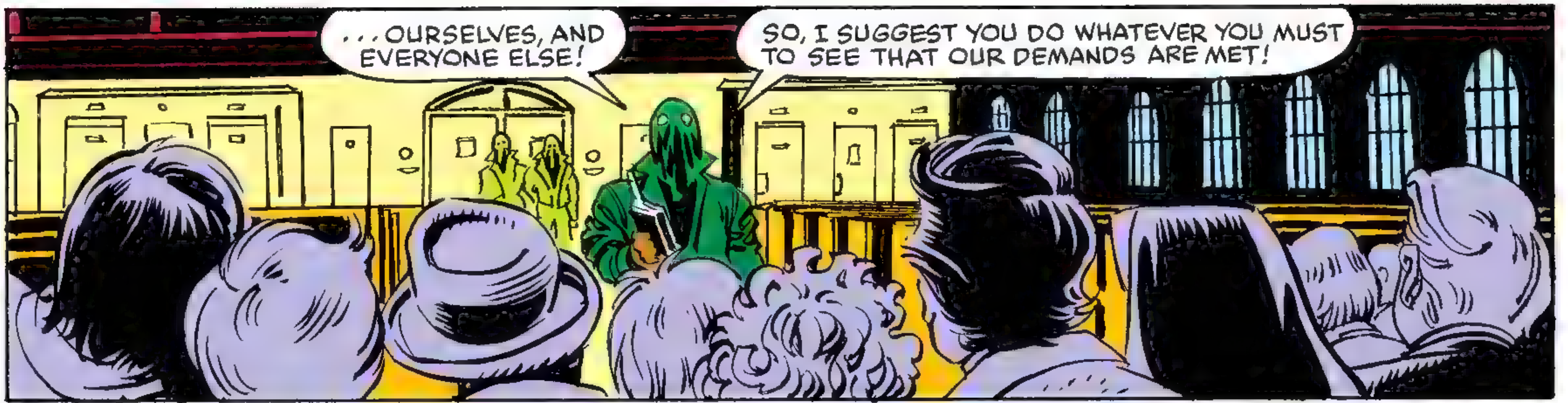
EH?
NOW
WHAT?

...WHO HAVE
SEIZED THE OUR-
LADY-OF-GRACE
CHAPEL. IT IS STILL
UNKNOWN HOW MANY
ARE INVOLVED IN
THE TAKEOVER--







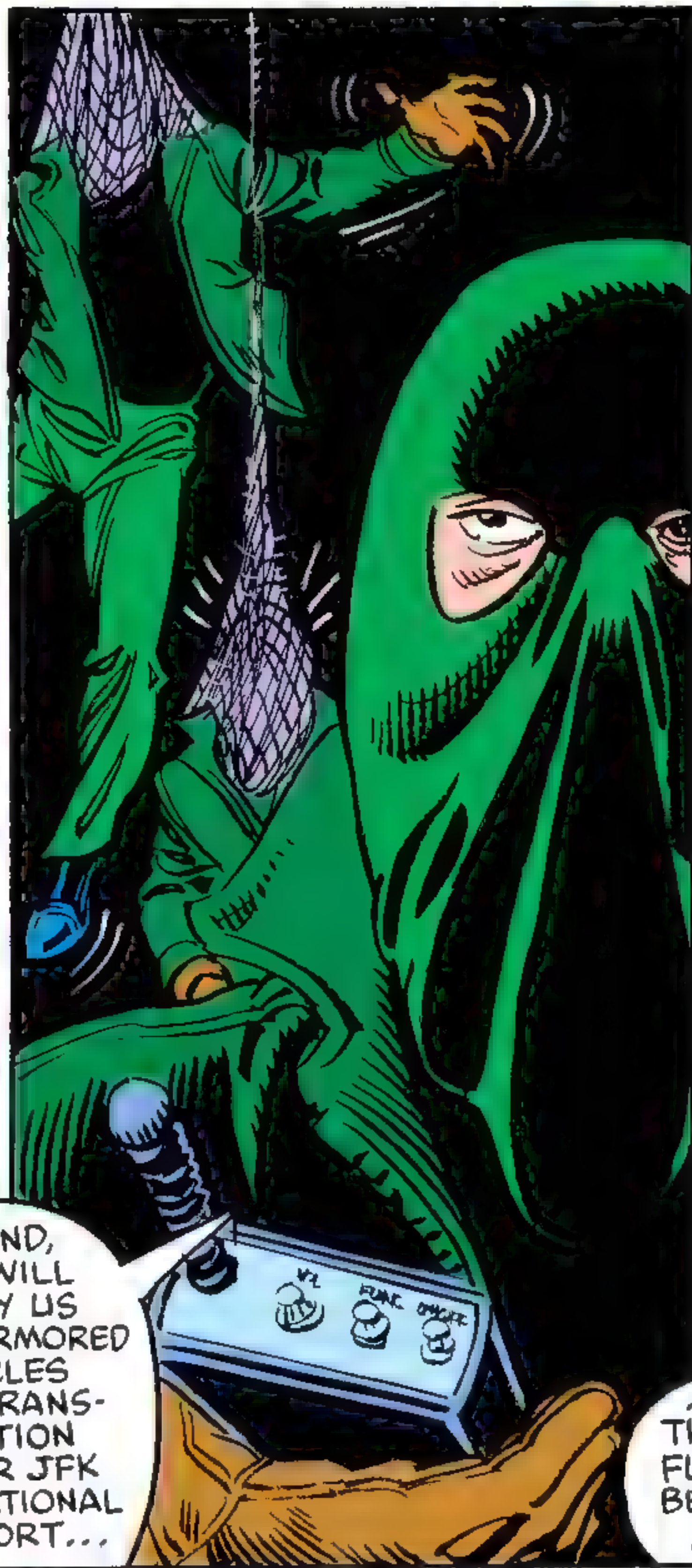


... OURSELVES, AND EVERYONE ELSE!

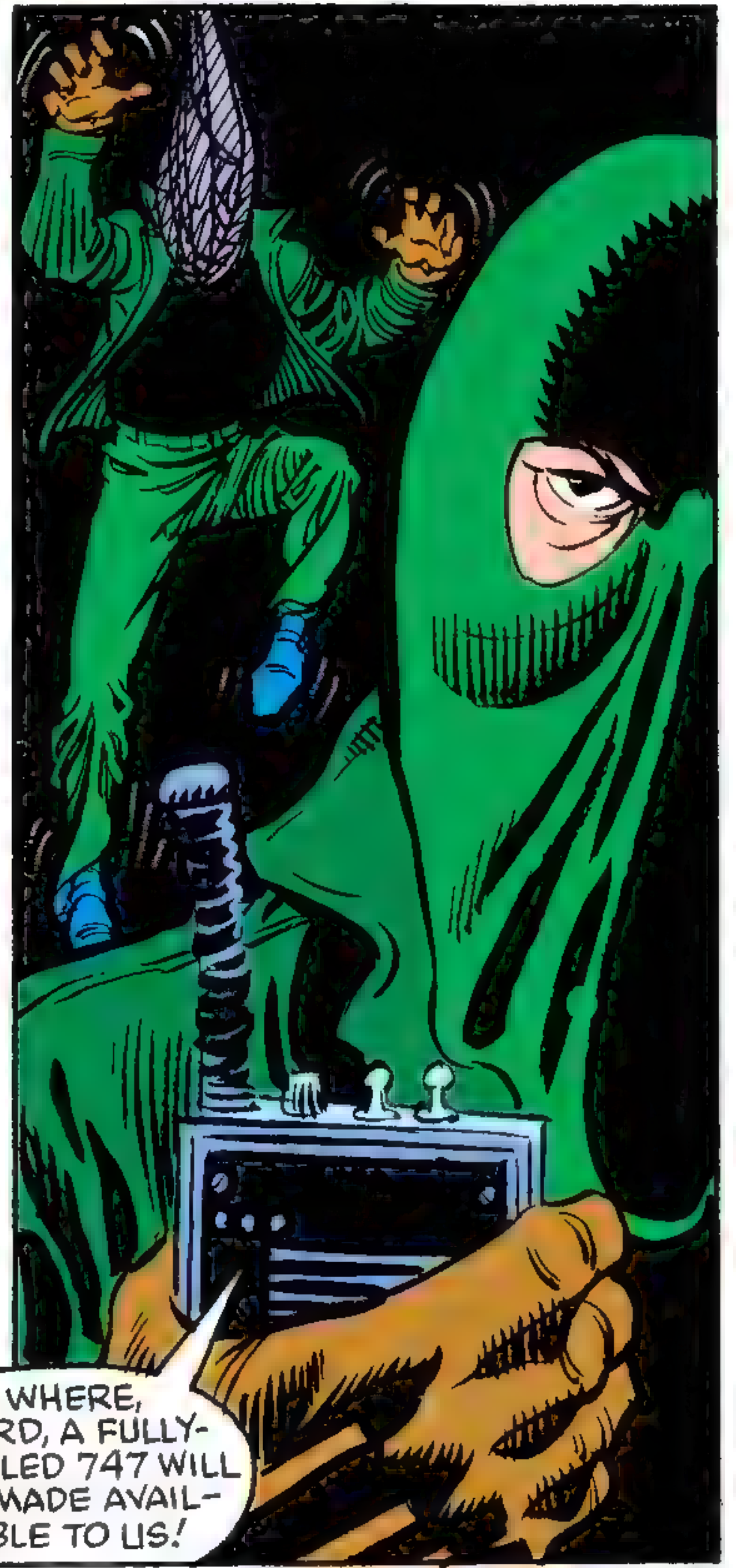
SO, I SUGGEST YOU DO WHATEVER YOU MUST TO SEE THAT OUR DEMANDS ARE MET!



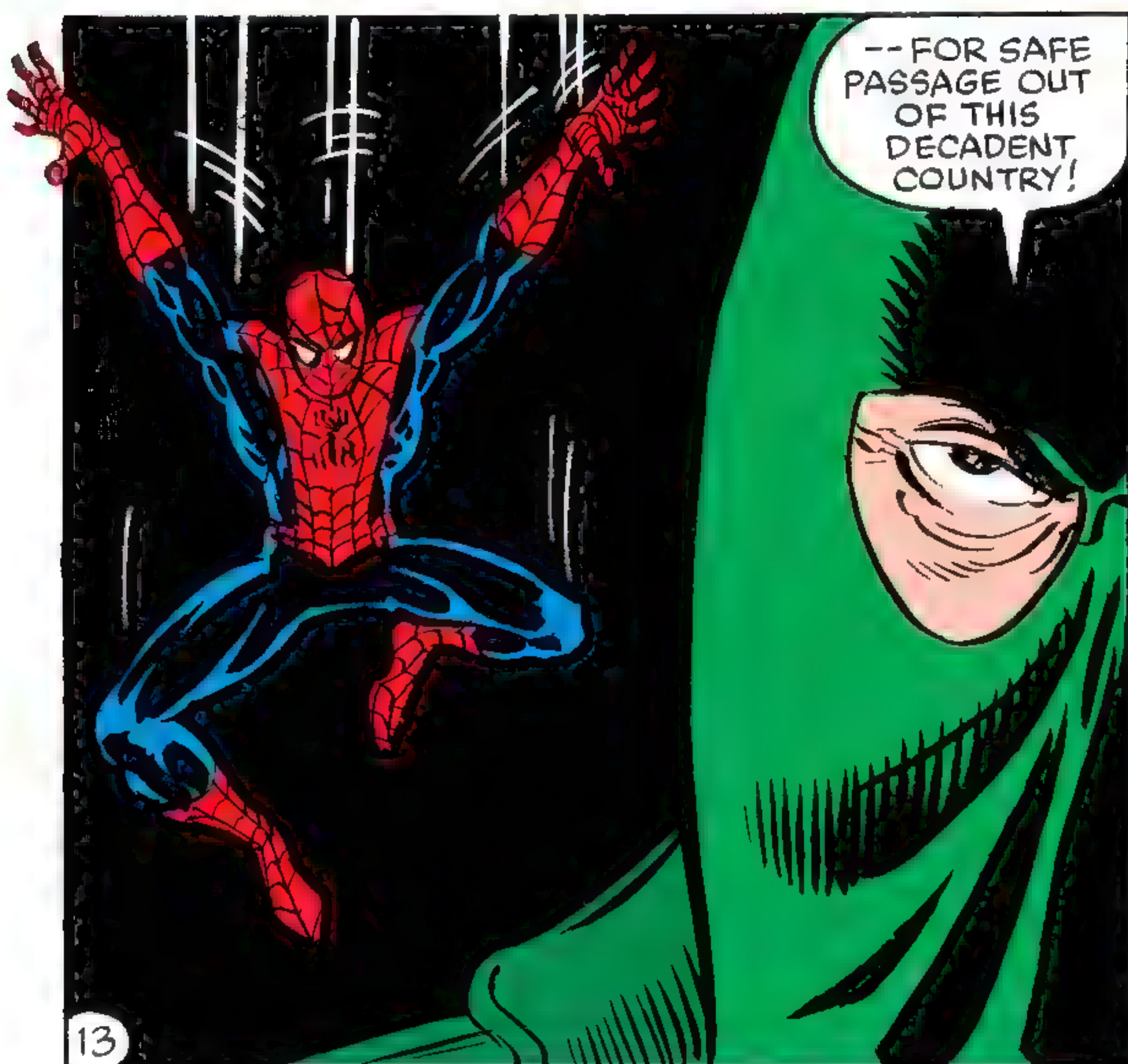
I WILL REPEAT THEM ONE LAST TIME! FIRST... THE U.L.A. CADRE LEADERS WHO WERE CAPTURED LAST MONTH... MUST BE RELEASED FROM PRISON AND BROUGHT HERE!



SECOND, YOU WILL SUPPLY US WITH ARMORED VEHICLES FOR TRANSPORTATION TO YOUR JFK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT...



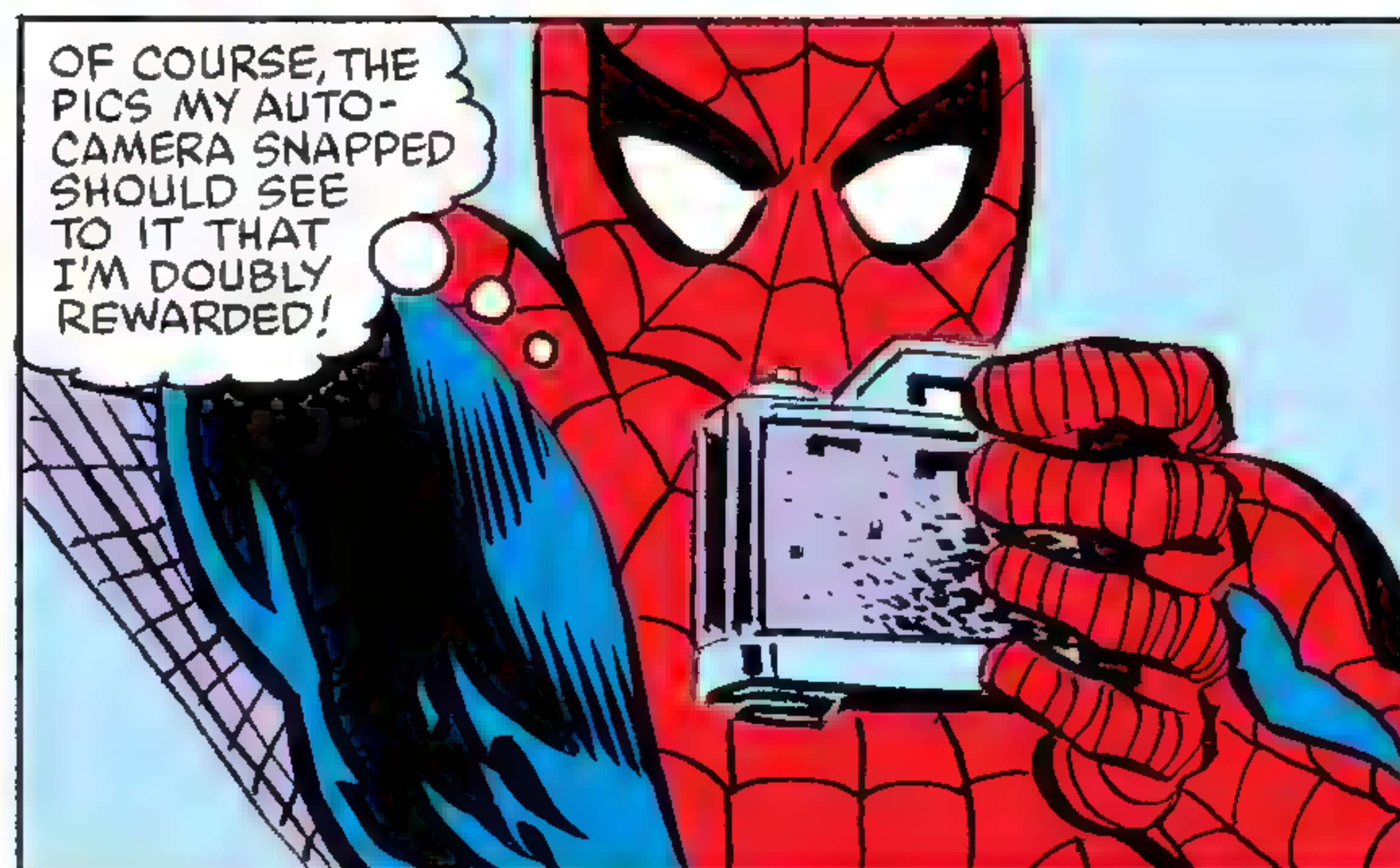
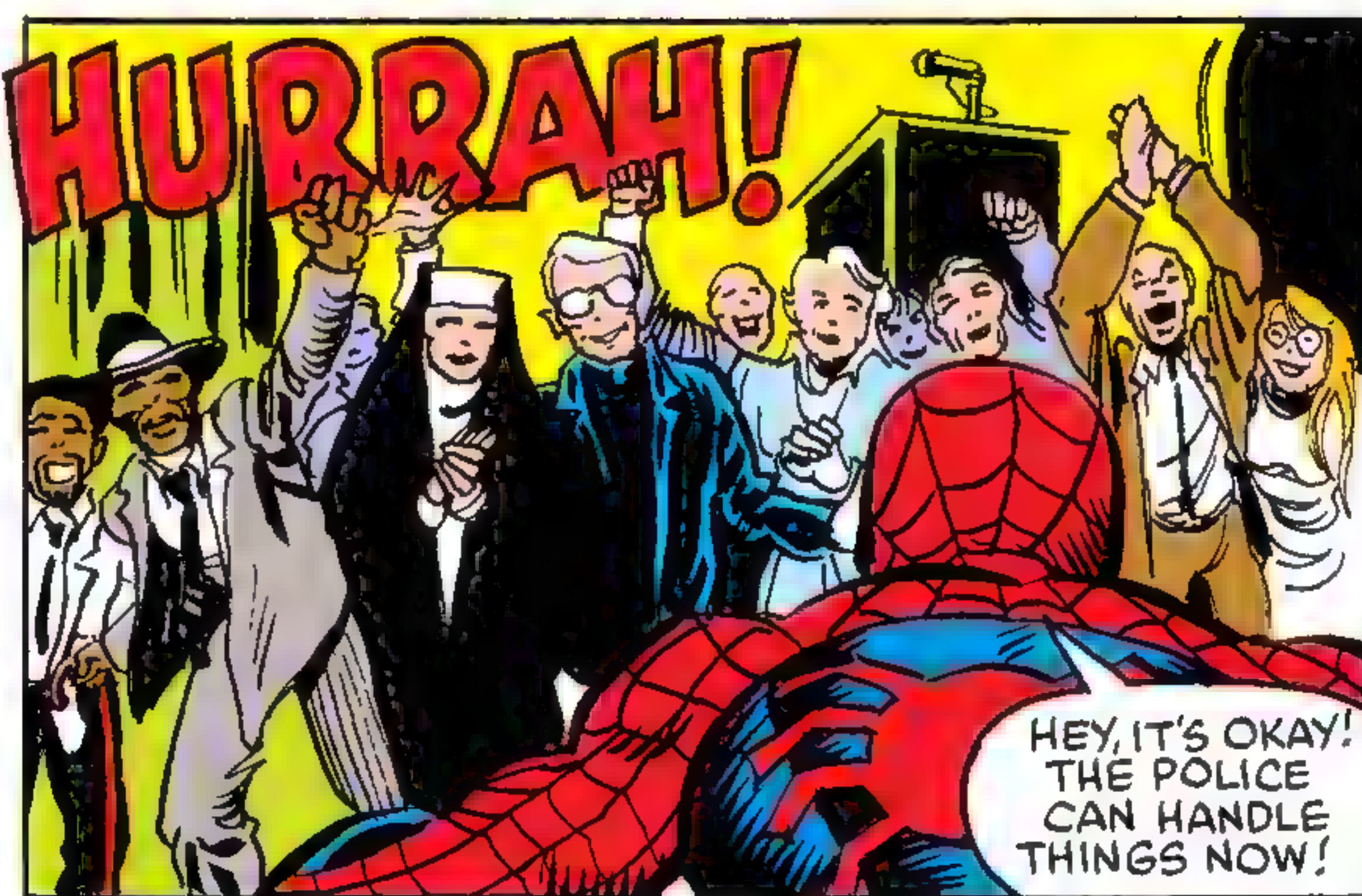
... WHERE, THIRD, A FULLY-FUELED 747 WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO US!

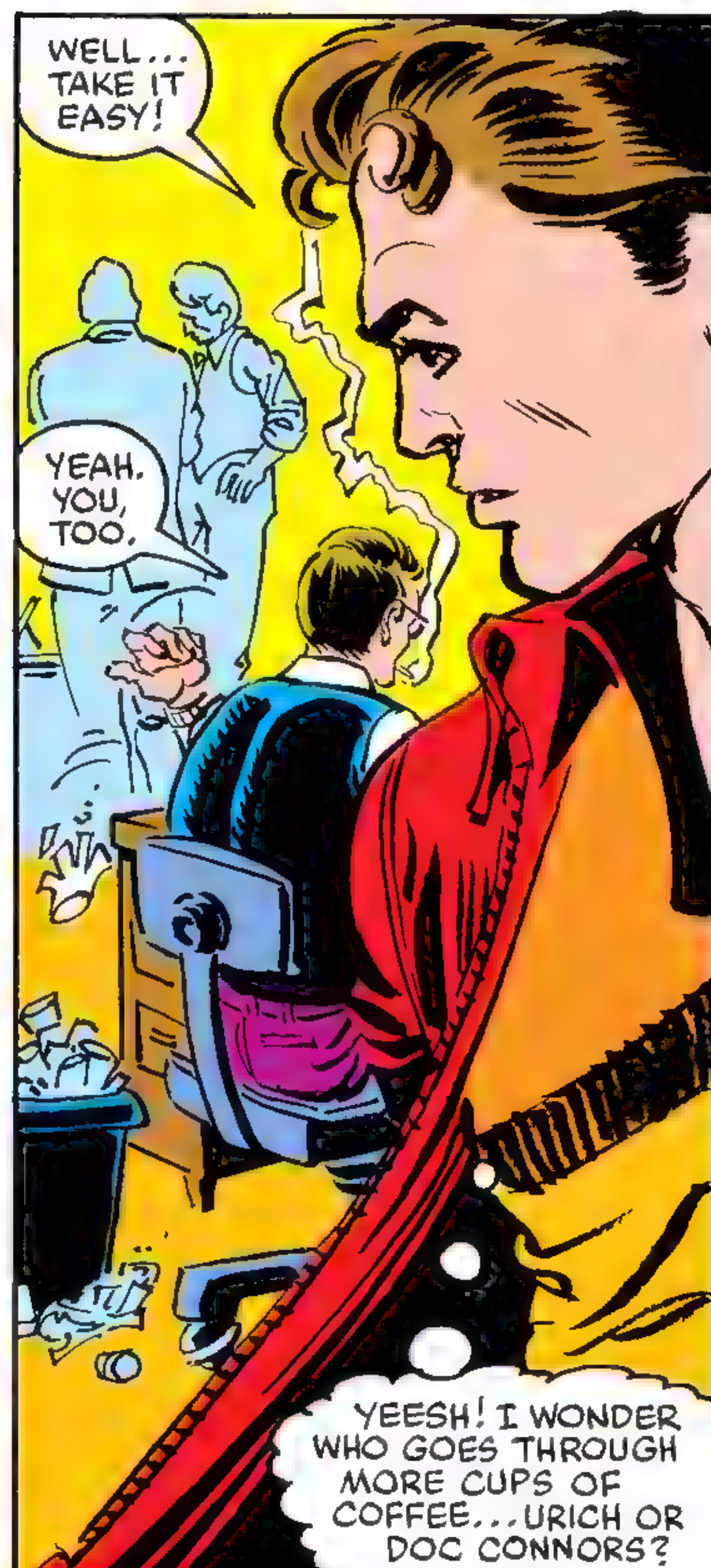
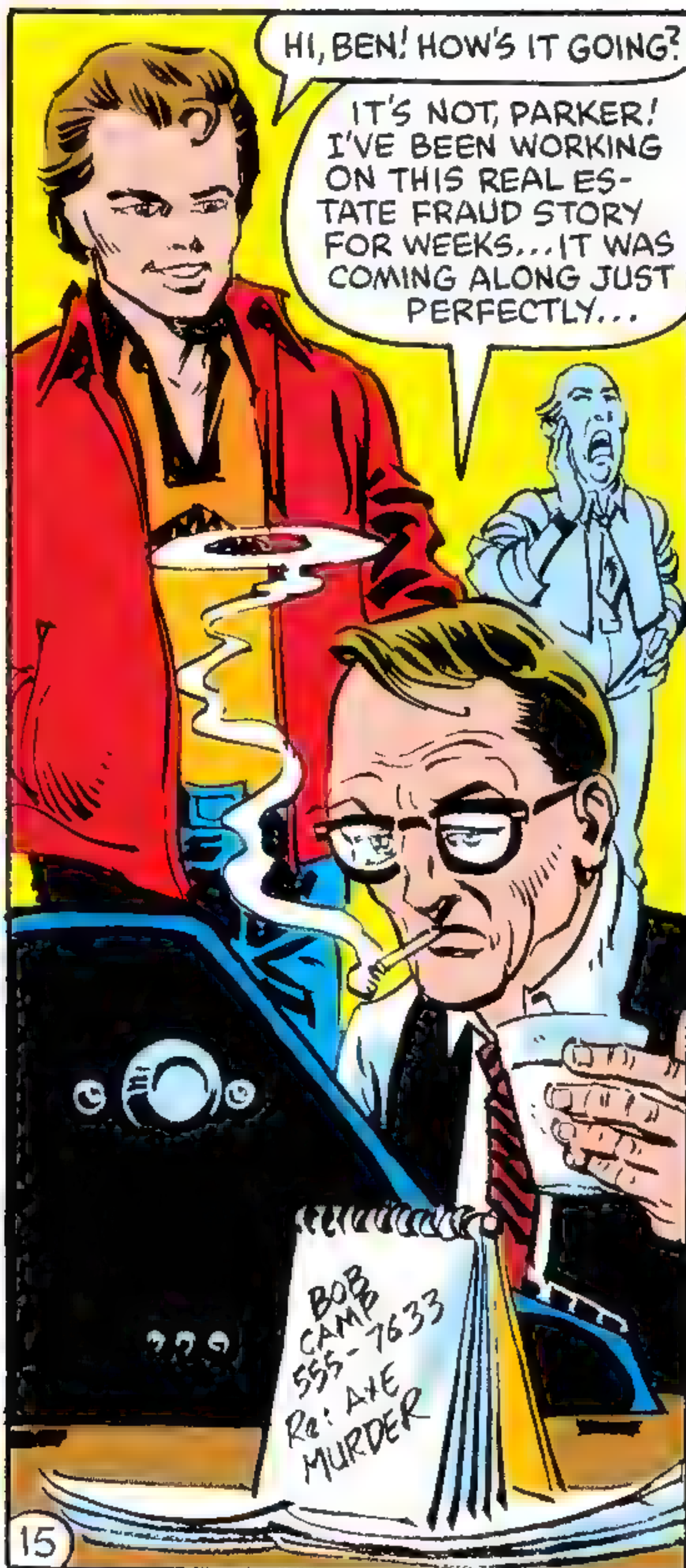
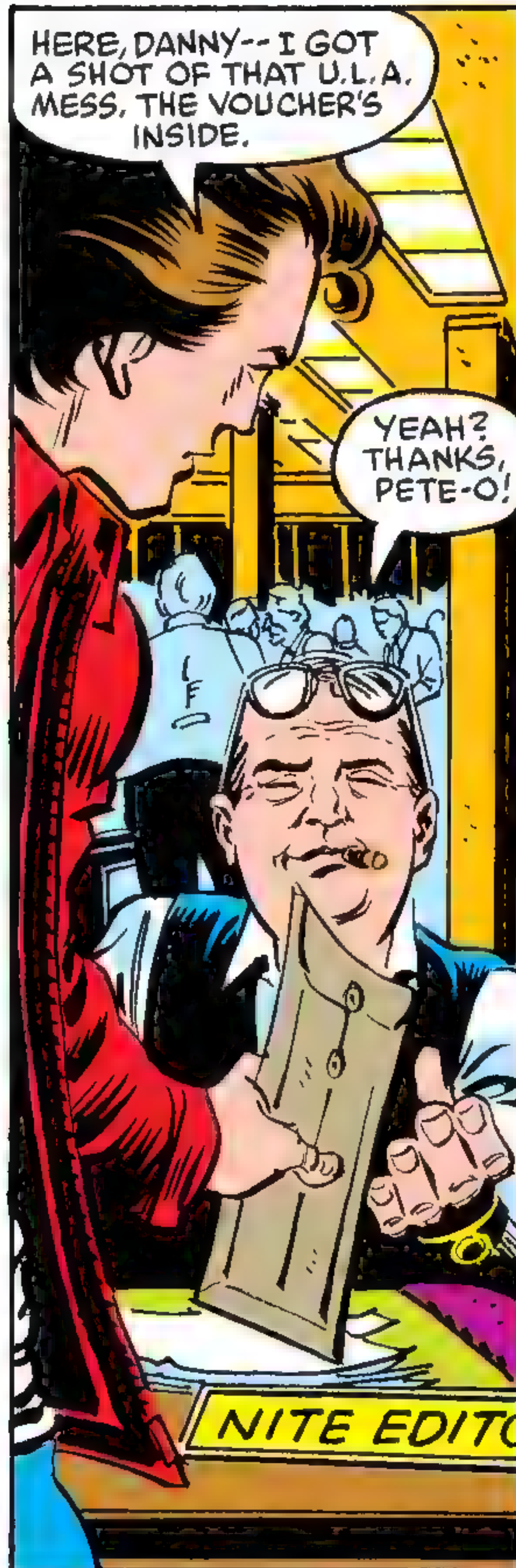


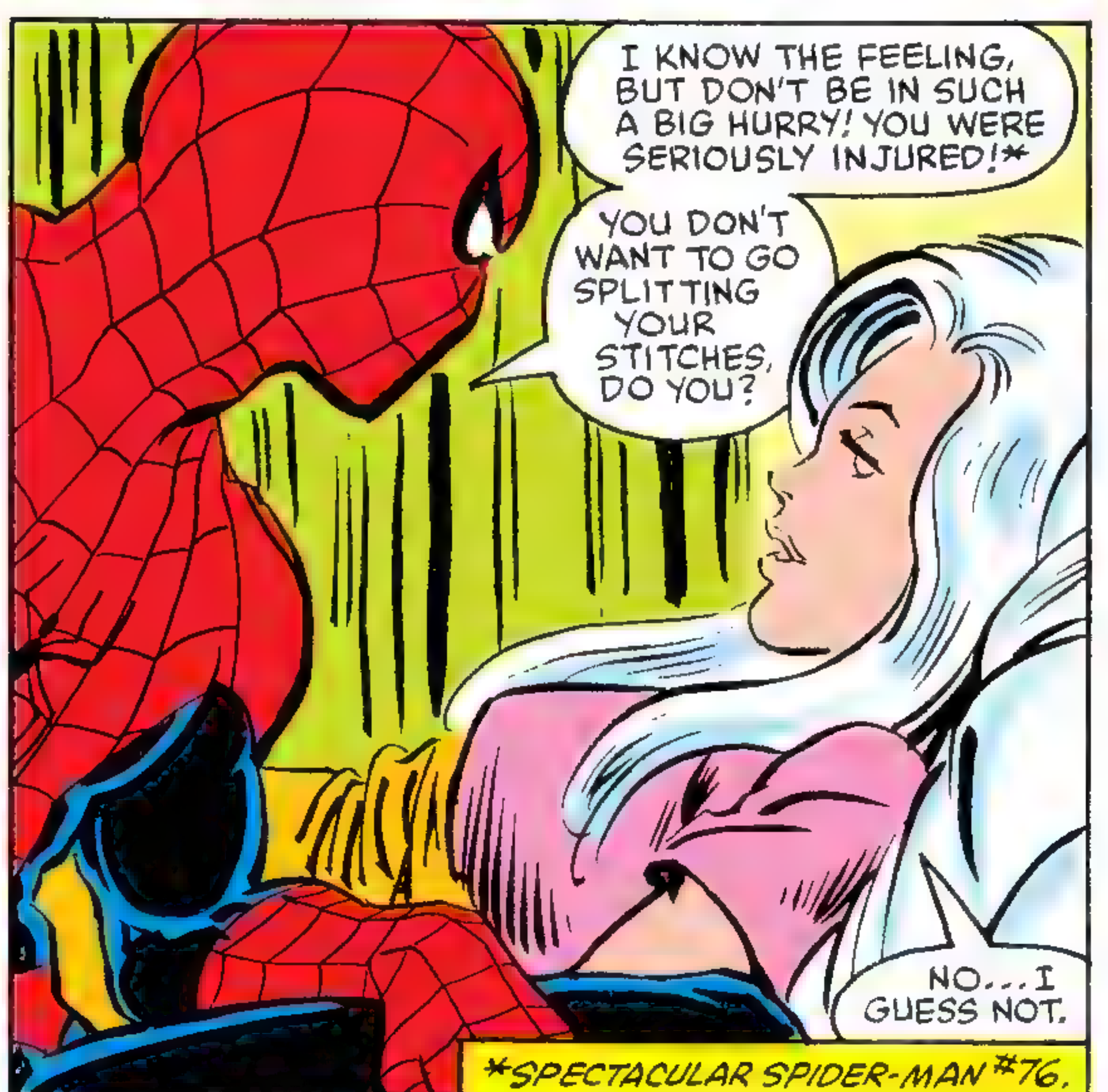
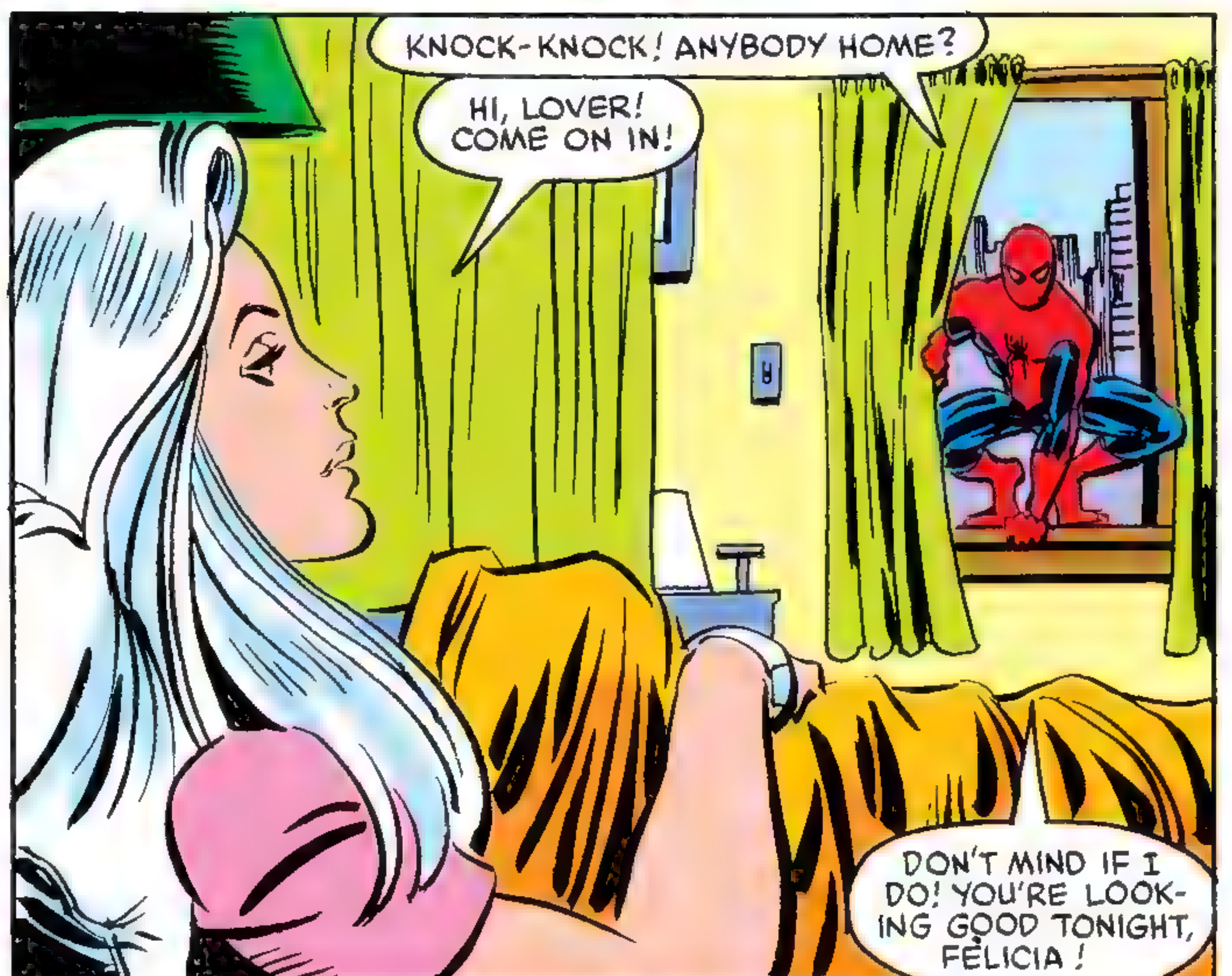
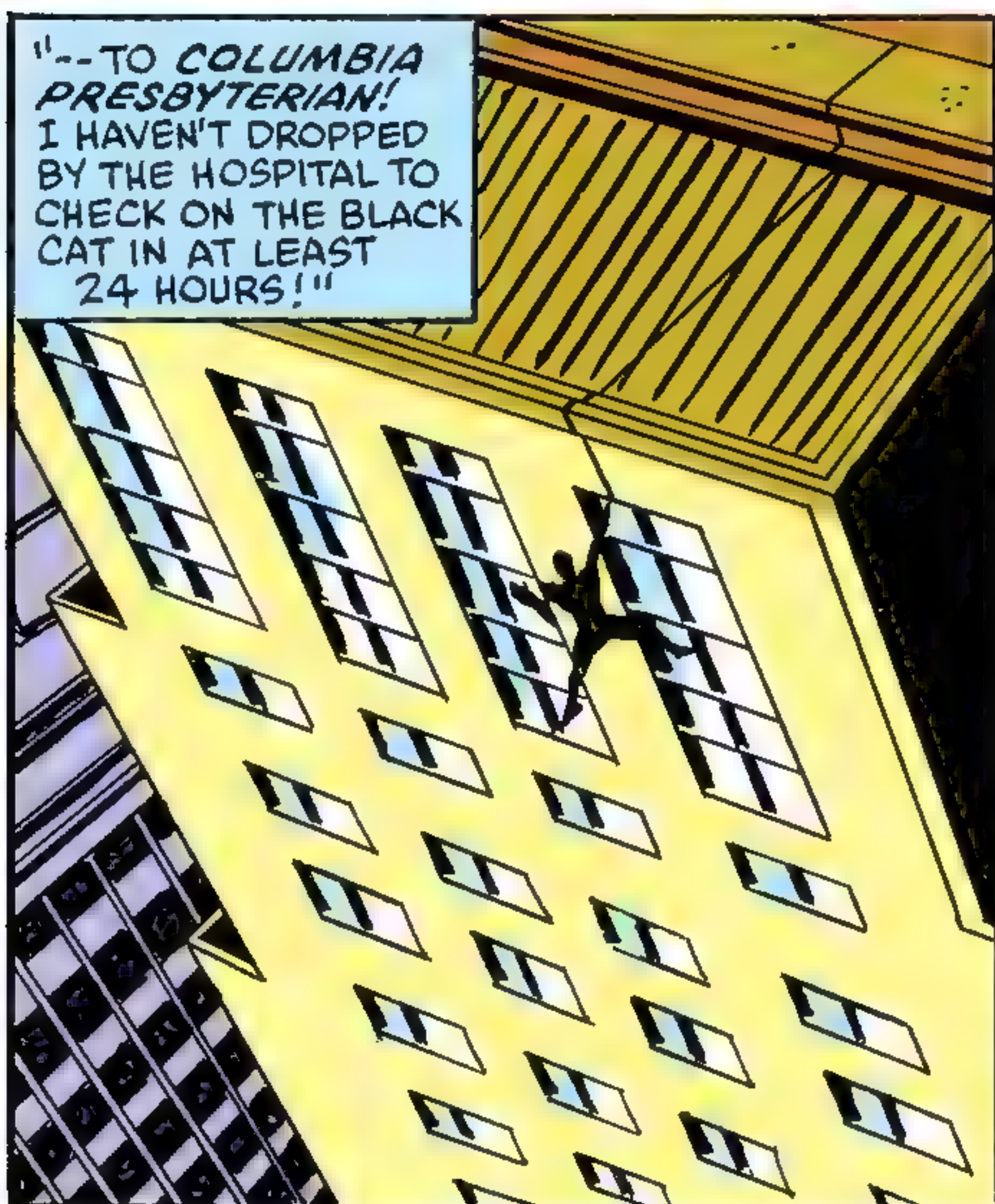
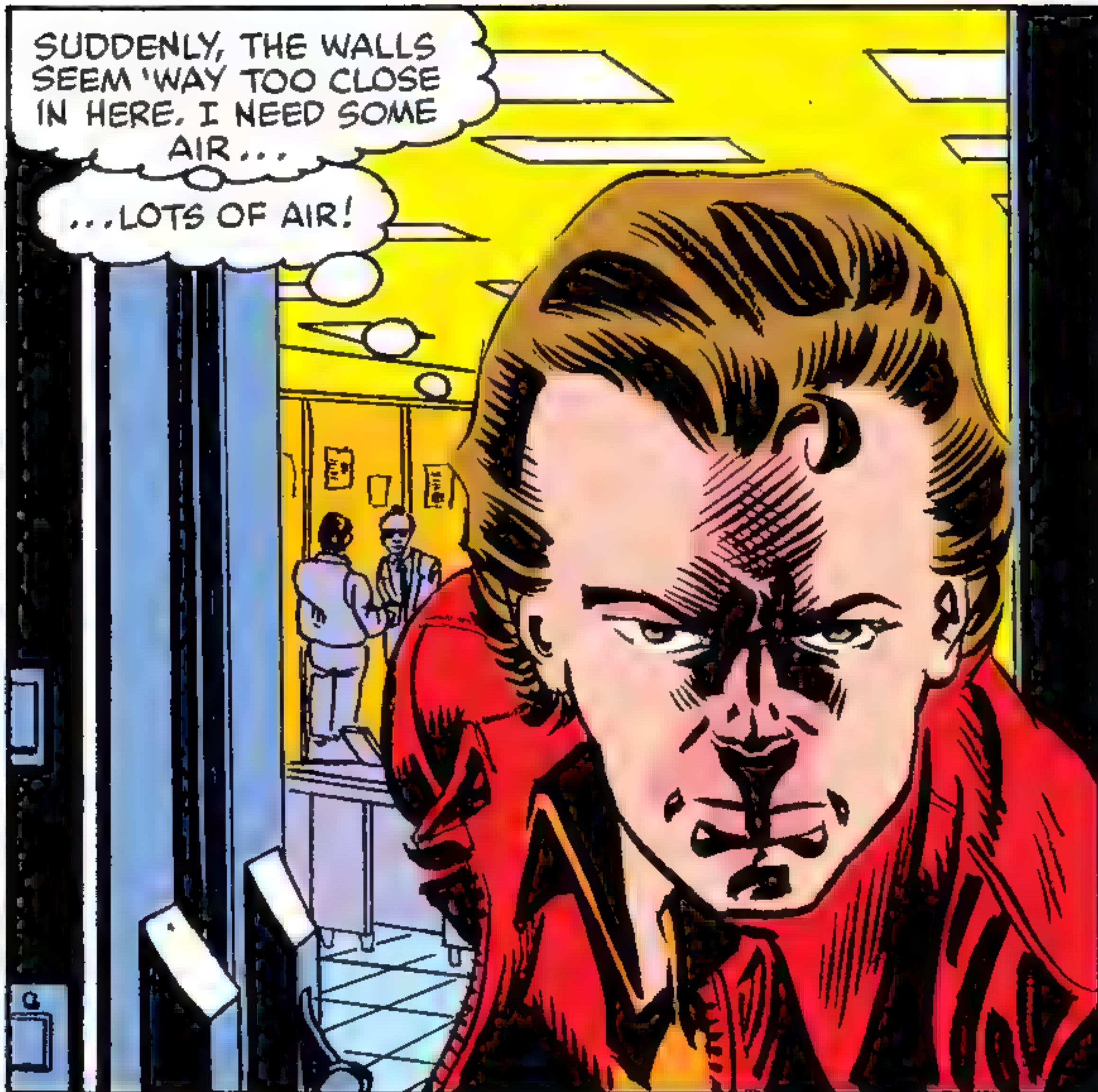
-- FOR SAFE PASSAGE OUT OF THIS DECADENT COUNTRY!

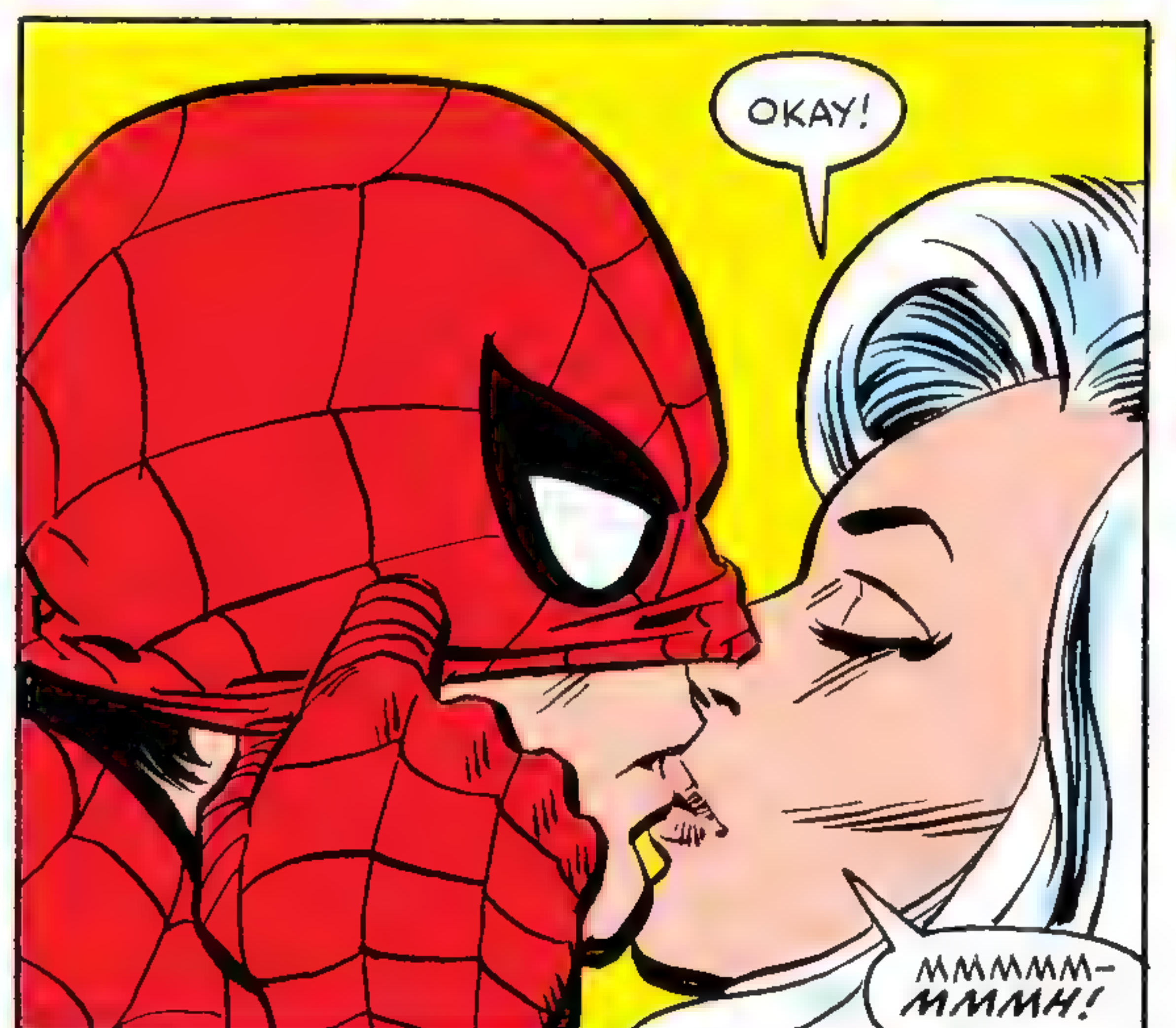
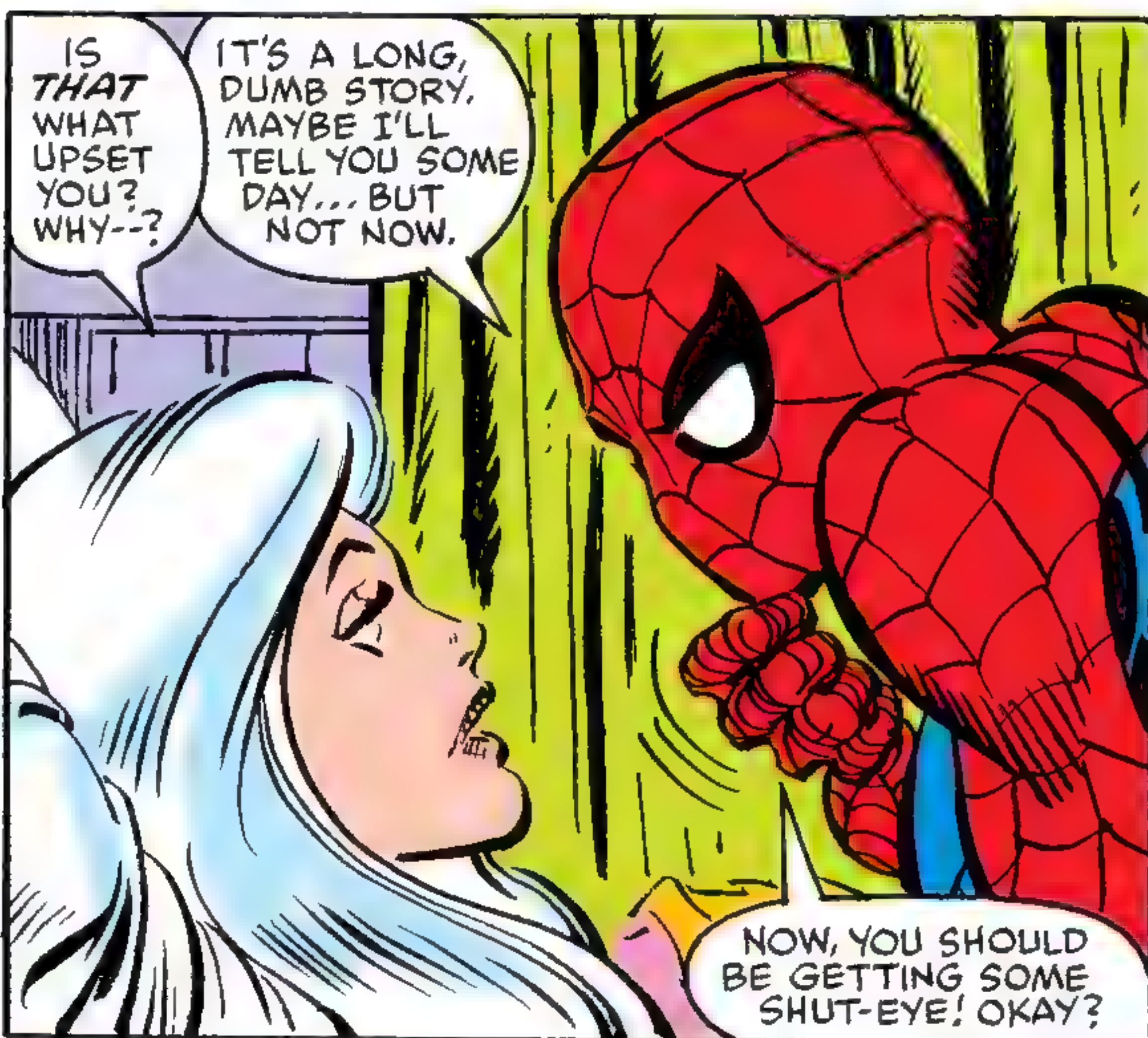


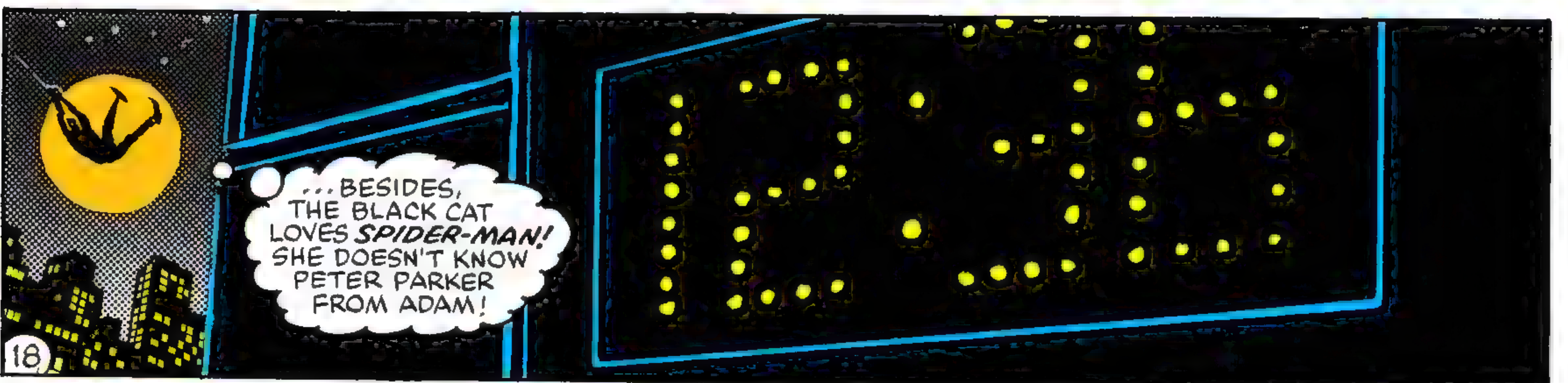
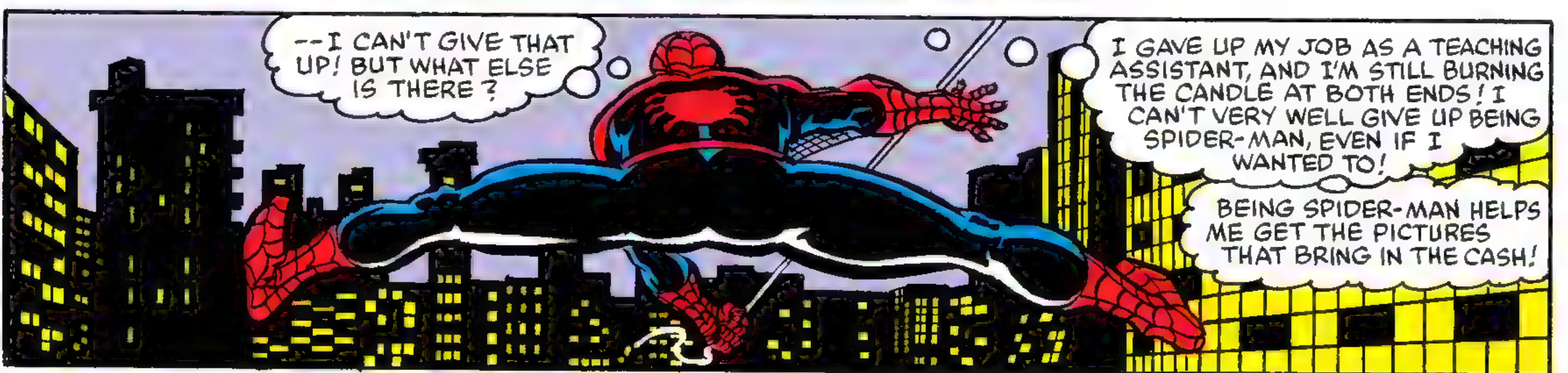
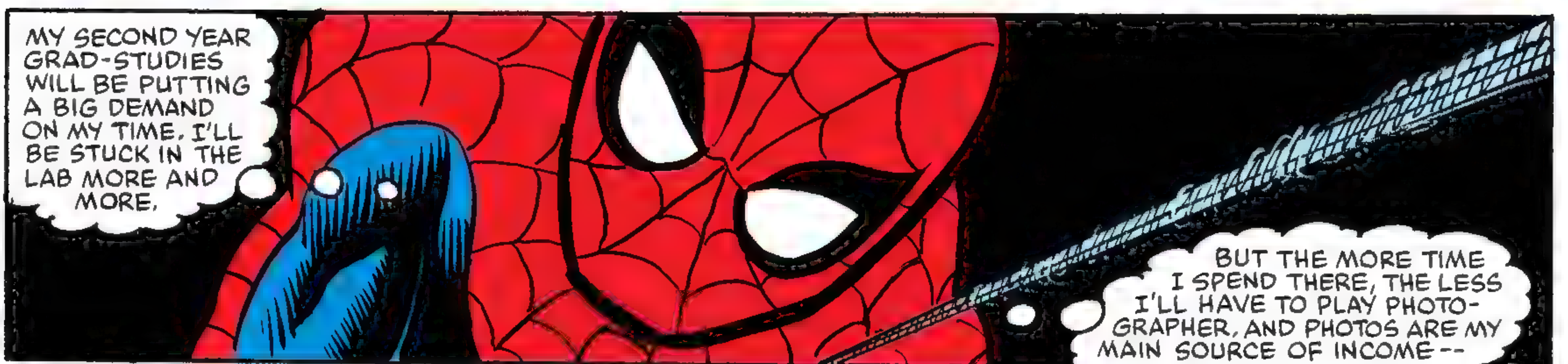
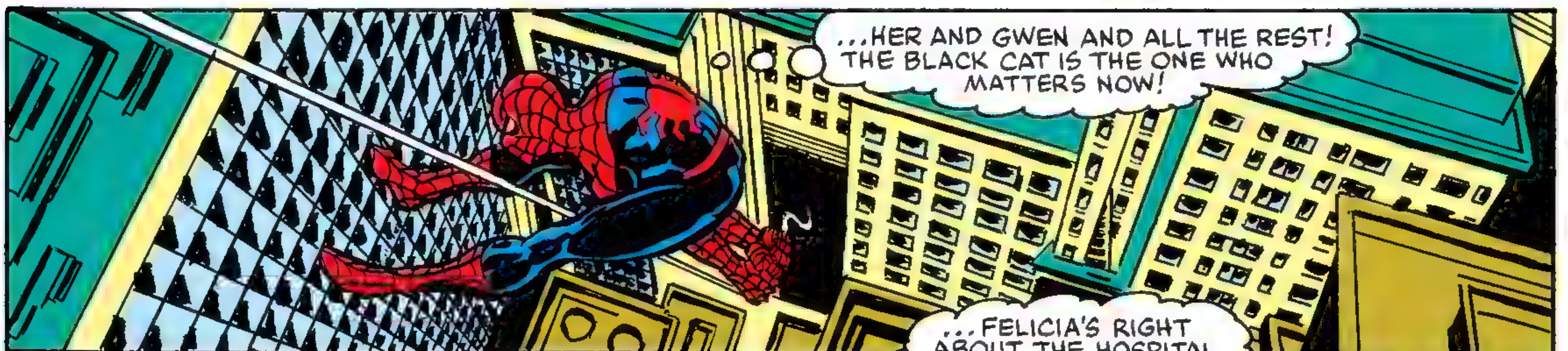
WE WILL TAKE THE PRIEST AND THE NUNS WITH US TO INSURE YOUR COOPERATION. IS THAT CLEAR?











NAW, I COULDN'T GIVE UP
BEING SPIDER-MAN ANY
MORE THAN I COULD
GIVE UP BREATHING!

SO WHAT
DO I DO?

IF I COULD
GET THE HOSPITAL
TO HOLD OFF
ON THE BILL
FOR A WHILE...
IF I CUT OUT
EVERYTHING
ELSE--

--AND REALLY
APPLIED MYSELF,
I'LL BET I COULD
EARN MY DOCTOR-
ATE IN A YEAR!

YEAH, BUT
THEN WHAT?
A DOCTORATE
-- EVEN IN MY
FIELD-- IS NO
GUARANTEE
OF A JOB!

EVEN
IF I GOT
A JOB,
WOULD IT
BRING IN
ENOUGH
MONEY--FAST
ENOUGH--TO
HANDLE
ALL THE
BILLS?

I STILL HAVE
AUNT MAY TO
THINK ABOUT
TOO, AFTER ALL!
AND RENT
AND FOOD--!

WHAT
AM I
GOING
TO DO?!



THE ESU CAMPUS,
7:50 AM...

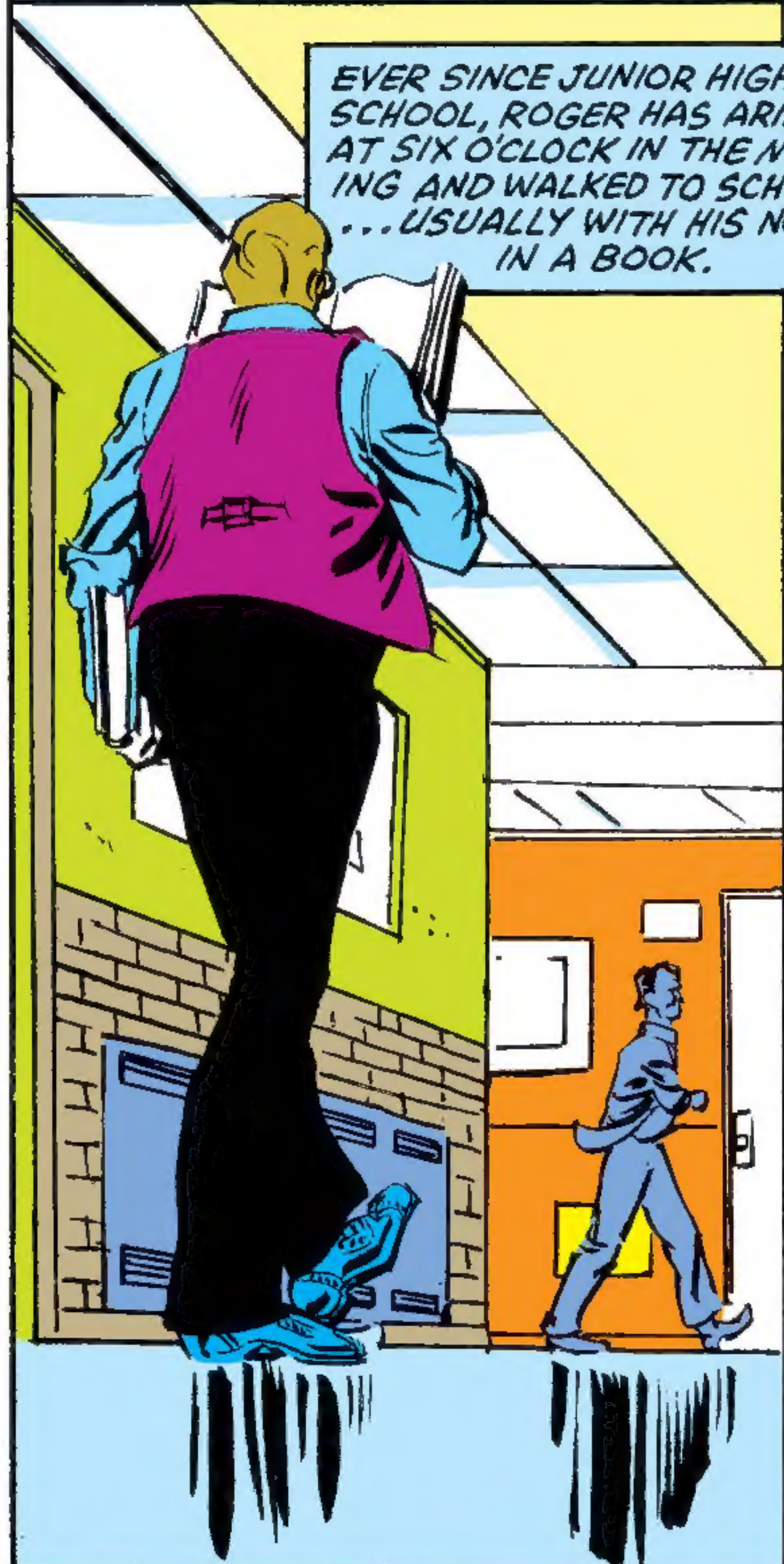
AT THIS HOUR, THE ONLY PEOPLE UP AND AROUND ARE
FRESHMEN WITH
EARLY MORNING
CLASSES--

--AND THE TERMINALLY STUDIOUS...
SUCH AS GRADUATE STUDENT
ROGER HOCHBERG!

IN THE PAST ELEVEN YEARS, HE'S
READ THOUSANDS OF BOOKS, RUN
INTO COUNTLESS MAIL BOXES, AND
HAD SEVERAL SURPRISES.

THIS IS ONE OF HIS MORNINGS FOR
SURPRISES.

EVER SINCE JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL, ROGER HAS ARISEN
AT SIX O'CLOCK IN THE MORN-
ING AND WALKED TO SCHOOL
...USUALLY WITH HIS NOSE
IN A BOOK.



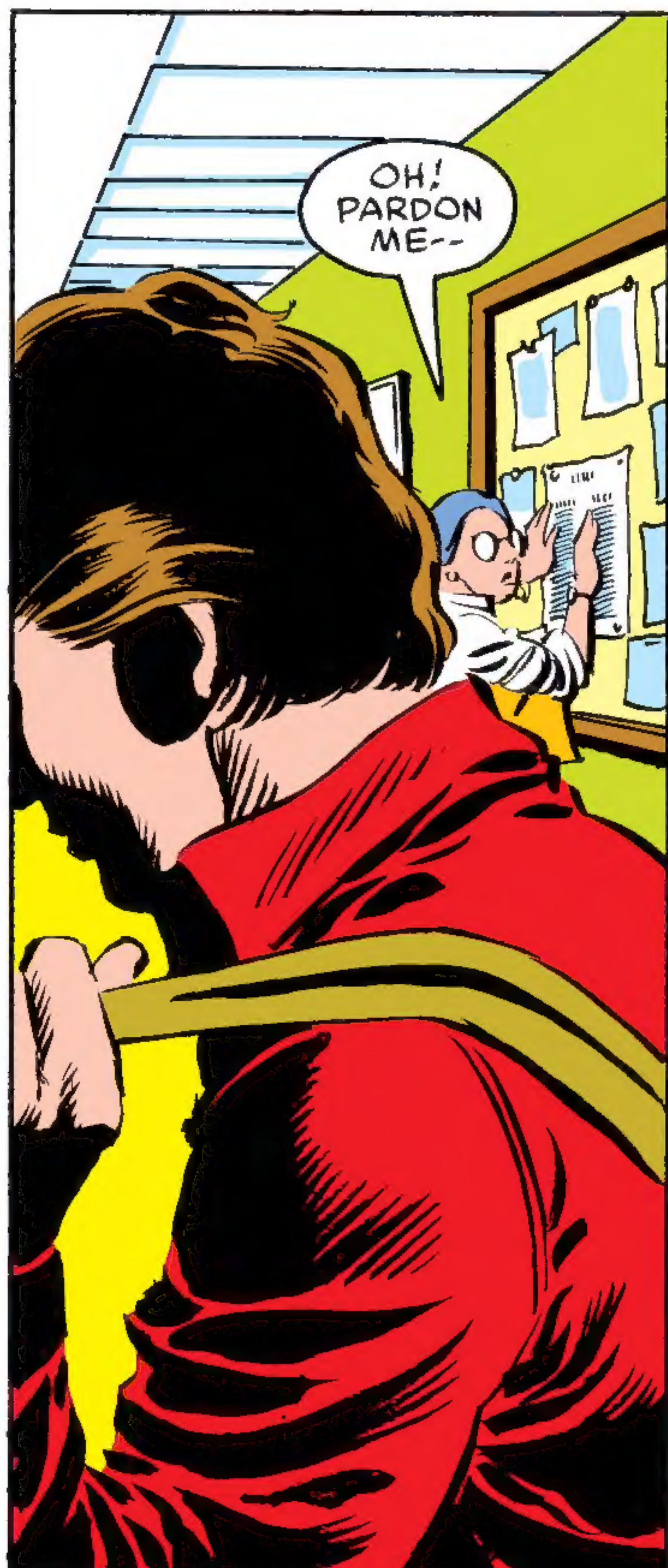
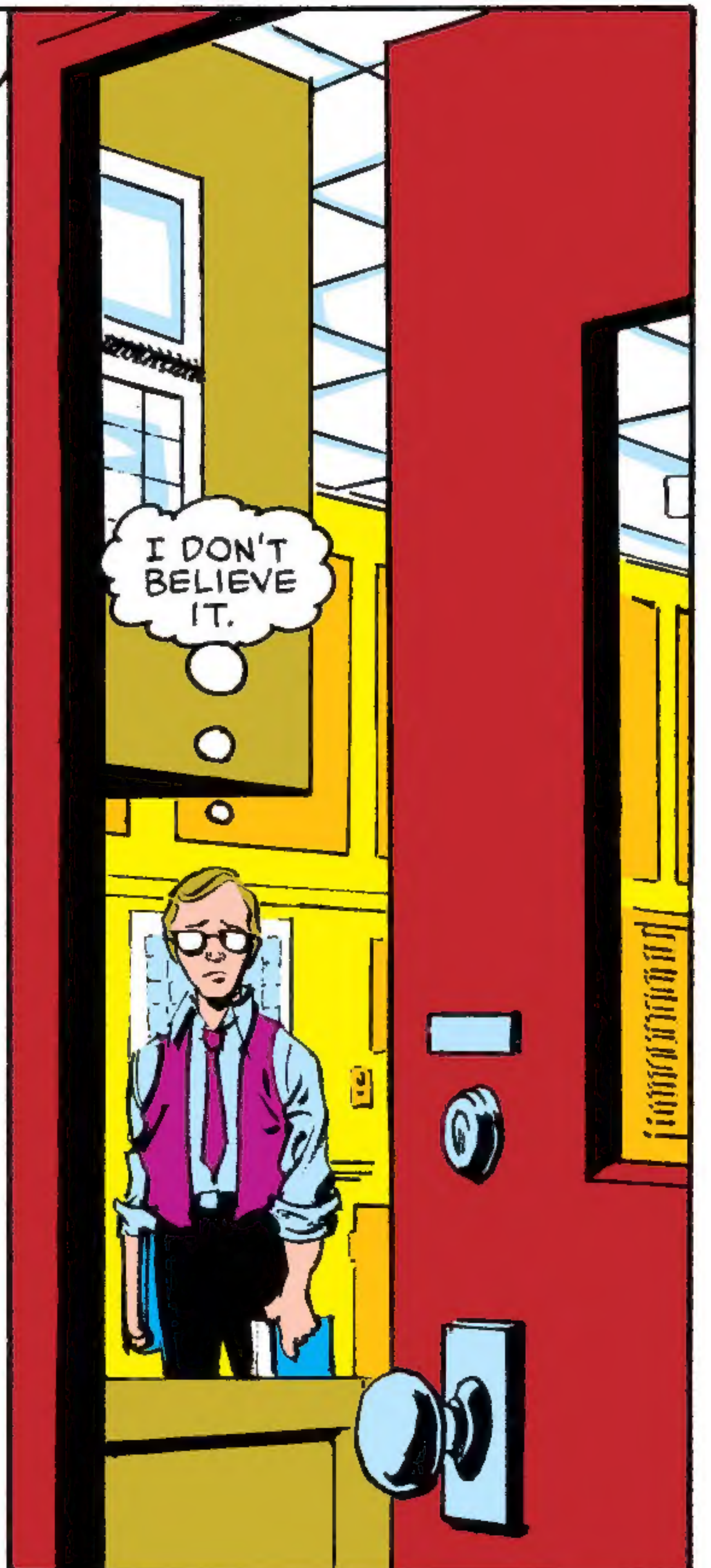
I'VE NEVER SEEN
YOU HERE THIS
EARLY BEFORE.

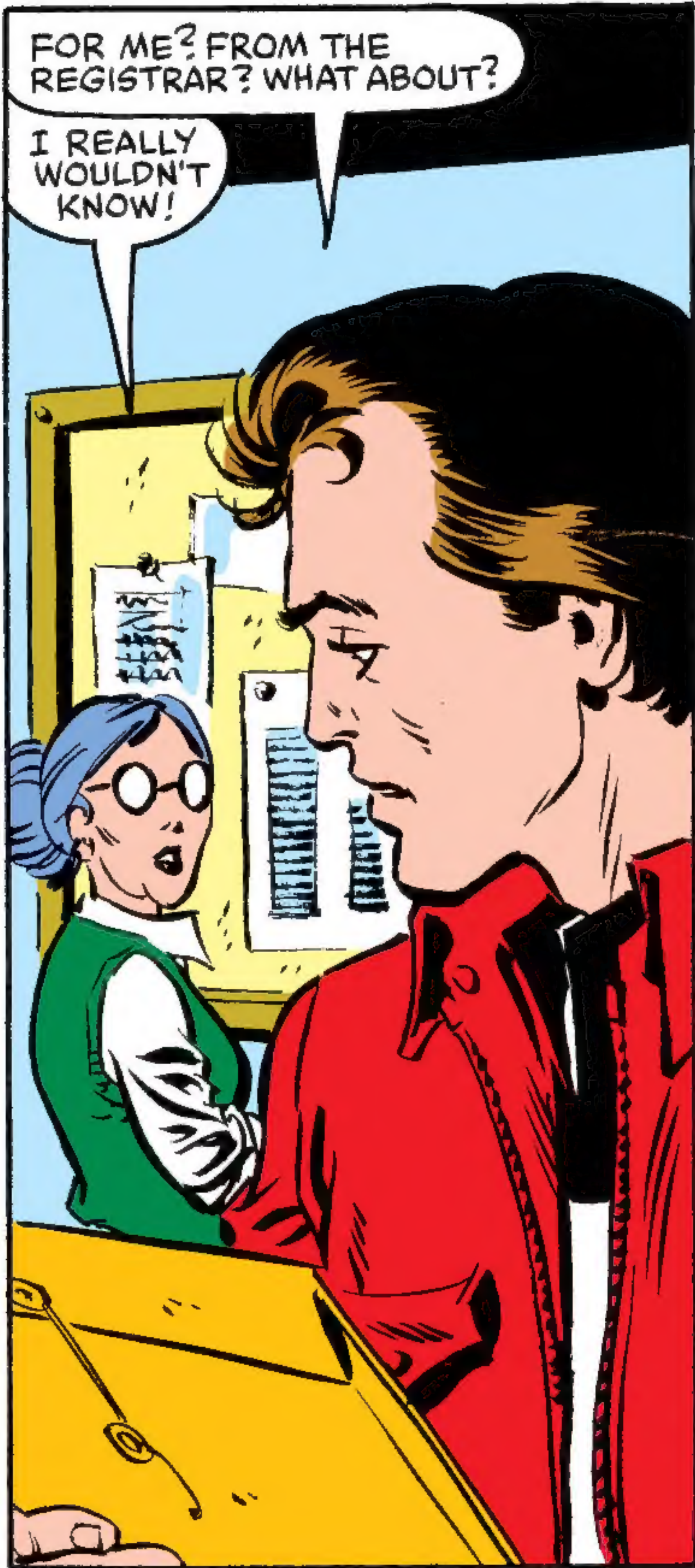
UH-HUH...WELL...I WAS UP
ALL NIGHT...COULDN'T SLEEP.
I HAD TOO MUCH ON MY MIND...
TOO MUCH TO DECIDE.

HERE'S A COPY OF
THE NOTES I'VE KEPT.
YOU'LL HAVE TO FIND
YOURSELF A NEW
LAB PARTNER.

A NEW--?
WHY?

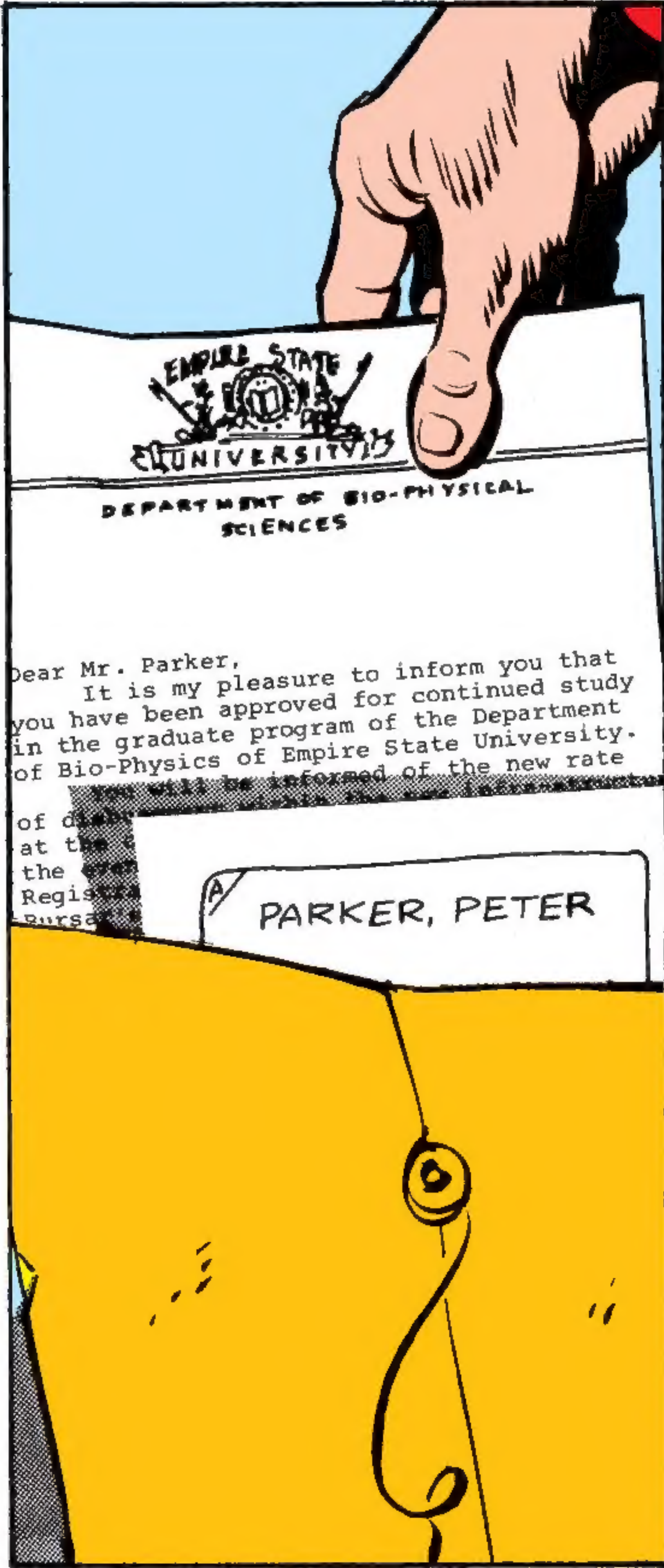
BUT I FINALLY
CAME TO A
DECISION.





FOR ME? FROM THE REGISTRAR? WHAT ABOUT?

I REALLY WOULDN'T KNOW!



EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY

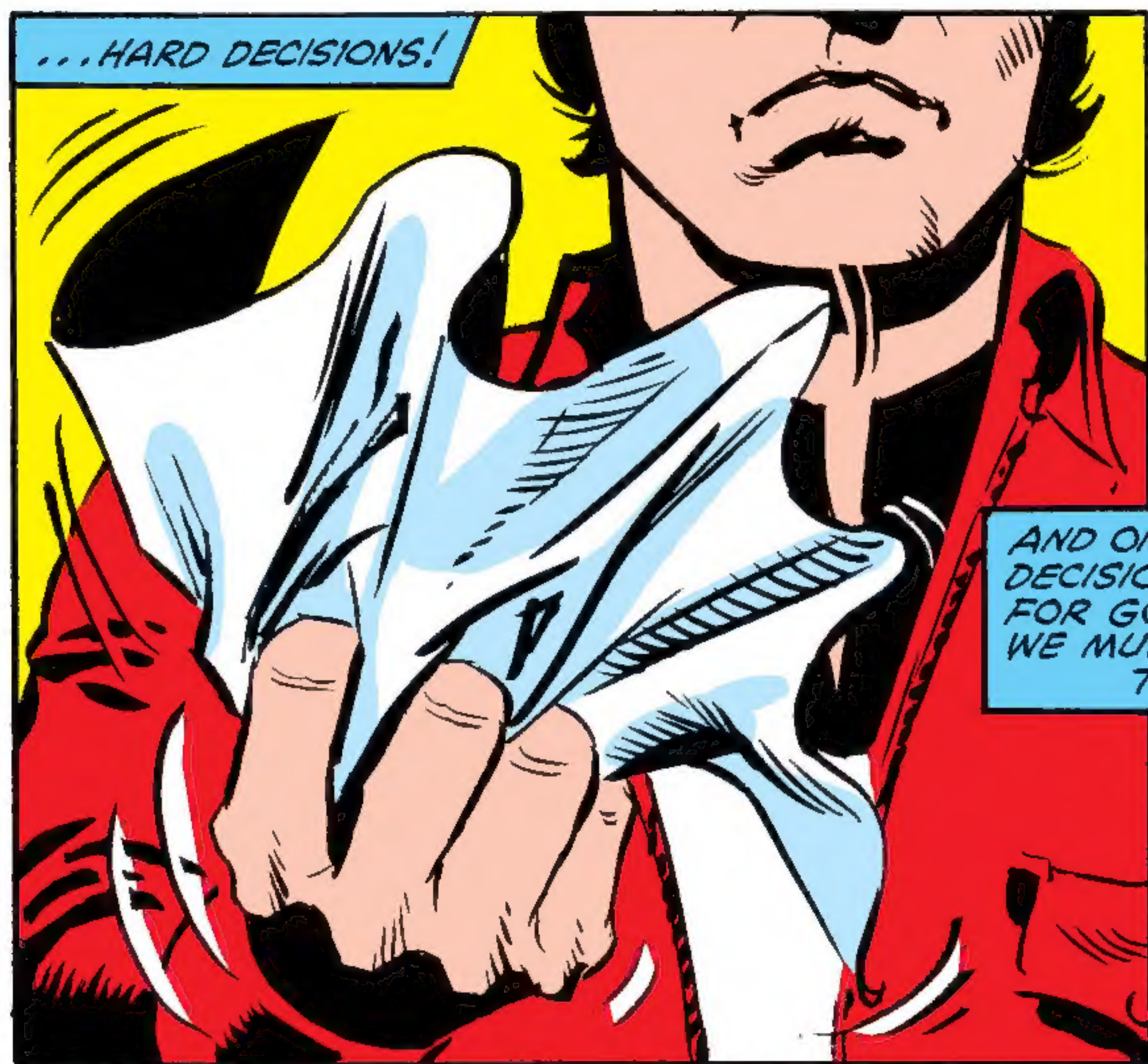
DEPARTMENT OF BIO-PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Dear Mr. Parker,
It is my pleasure to inform you that you have been approved for continued study in the graduate program of the Department of Bio-Physics of Empire State University.

PARKER, PETER



THERE COME TIMES IN ALL OF OUR LIVES WHEN WE MUST CONSIDER OUR OPTIONS AND MAKE DECISIONS...

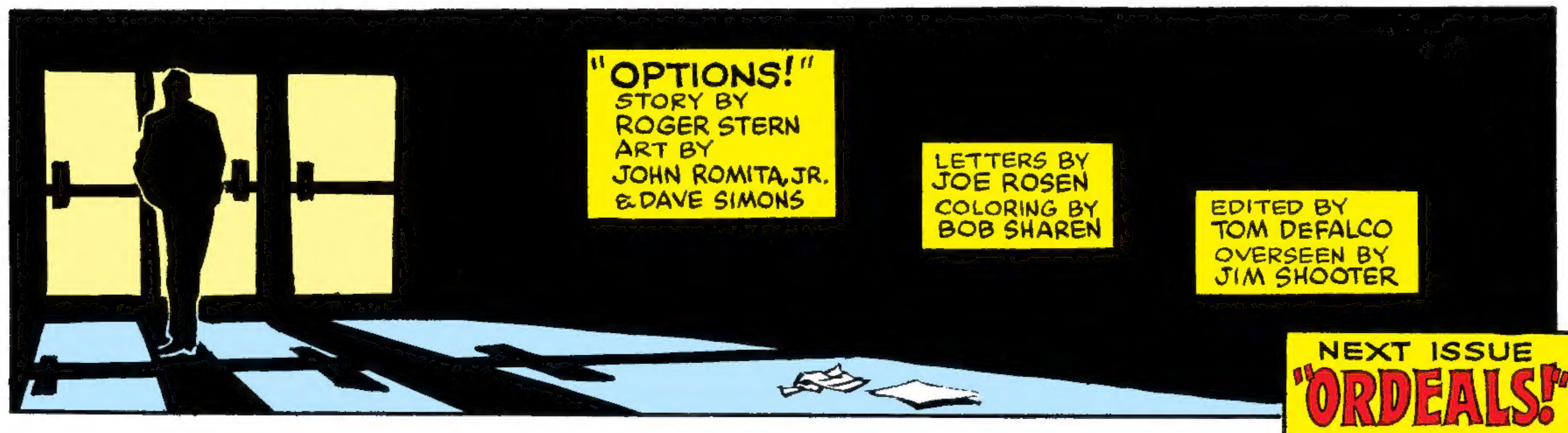


...HARD DECISIONS!

AND ONCE THOSE DECISIONS ARE MADE-- FOR GOOD OR BAD-- WE MUST LIVE WITH THEM...



... ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES.



"OPTIONS!"
STORY BY
ROGER STERN
ART BY
JOHN ROMITA, JR.
& DAVE SIMONS

LETTERS BY
JOE ROSEN
COLORING BY
BOB SHAREN

EDITED BY
TOM DEFALCO
OVERSEEN BY
JIM SHOOTER

NEXT ISSUE
"ORDEALS!"

THE SPIDER'S WEB

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

TOM DeFALCO
EDITOR
ELIOT BROWN
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Mr. DeFalco:

Thank you... both for the superb art and extraordinary plot-line on AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #238.

For so long I have waited for a good revival of the Green Goblin. I didn't want an inane Green Goblin IV or some carbon copy clone. (Everything had gotten really trite with the previous incarnations.)

Now, with the creation of Hobgoblin, you've added a new dimension to the hoped-for revival. You've given us a mysterious stranger who is his own man, with his own tastes... a man who, as he says, "knows how to use power" (unlike Harry Osborn and Bart Hamilton before him).

Revising the Goblin costumes and weapons was the best thing Hobgoblin could have done. There may be some who feel that Hobgoblin is only an echo of the original Green Goblin, but I disagree. I feel that the Hobgoblin will make his mark in the Marvel Universe as a major adversary.

David Patterson
278 Main Street
Melrose, MA 02176

You're far from alone in your assessment of the Hobgoblin, Dave. If the mountain of mail that continues to flow into *The Spider's Web* is any indication – and it usually is – Hobby has made quite a hit with Marvel's Assembled.

Dear Tom,

From the striking cover to the last full-page ending, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #238 was an issue not merely to be read, but to be savored. I never thought you could improve on the Green Goblin, but the Hobgoblin could well become Spider-Man's most powerful foe. The only thing that bothered me in the entire issue was the scene in which Spider-Man was dangling upside-down in the sewer and shining his spider-signal light around. I'll bet you can't tell me why the Spider-insignia on the light was not also upside-down when projected.

Sara Purviance
4431 Aldrich Road
Bellingham, WA 98226

Sure, I can, Sara! The lens of the spider-signal light on Spider-Man's belt has an adjustable lens which can be turned 360-degrees... so that it can project things "right-side-up" even when Spider-Man is upside-down!

Dear Tom,

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #238 merely confirms my belief that Roger Stern is the best thing to happen to this book in years. While some writers are concerned with making a book cover in their own image, such is not the case with Mr. Stern. He manages to incorporate into these stories the qualities that made SPIDER-MAN great in the first place, while subtly adding his own distinctive style to the magazine. This is apparent with the introduction of Hobgoblin as the newest "heir" to the Green Goblin legacy.

With the original Goblin dead and buried, Spider-Man has to confront an entirely different kind of foe, rather than a vengeance-seeking son or some other person assuming

the old Goblin's identity. And yet, isn't it ironic that the legacy of Norman Osborn continues to haunt Spider-Man?

It was a stroke of genius to obscure the face of the Hobgoblin. It was also nice to see Mary Jane Watson and her aunt back in these pages. Let's see more of them in the future, okay?

The artwork of Romita and Romita was sensational! I loved their work together on this issue and on last summer's SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL. How about occasionally having them team-up some more?

Kevin Vicks
1786 Prospect Place
Brooklyn, NY 11233

Whenever I can, Kevin! Whenever I can!

Dear Tom,

Ever since you assumed the editor's position of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, the book has really shaped up. Personally, I feel that SPIDER-MAN should be handled by the best talents in the business, because he's one of the best characters in all of comics.

And now he is!

Of course, I like the new art team of John Romita Jr. and John Romita Sr. Having the elder Romita sit in as inker was terrific. (Think you could get him to do an occasional solo job?)

Concerning the story... well, I've always liked the Green Goblin, but I could never think of a way to bring him back. The old revivals had become tiresome, so I didn't think there were any new wrinkles. I never thought of a whole new incarnation such as the Hobgoblin – brilliant.

As you can see, I'm very pleased with what's happening in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. Could you please just fit more of Mary Jane Watson into the storyline?

Bryan Good
13268 Wentworth Street
Arleta, CA 91331

Is MJ's appearance this issue enough, Bryan? No? Well, just wait – !

Dear Tom,

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #238 gave me an eerie feeling of *deja vu*. The plotting, reminiscent of Stan Lee's... the Romita artwork... the Rosen lettering... and the subject matter itself made me feel as if Rod Ser-

ling had popped out of the Twilight Zone and laid issue #39 on me! (Was that Green Goblin masterpiece really 200 months ago? Sheesh!)

The favorite fan game of 1983 will probably be guessing the Hobgoblin's true identity. So, let's play the game! The clues in issue #238 are as follows:

1. The Hobgoblin is Causasian, appears to be left-handed, and seems to have a physique that would indicate he is a male.
2. He has short hair.
3. He knew enough about the Green Goblin to be impressed with the discovery of the hideout and the equipment.
4. He knew, or knew about, Norman Osborn... at least enough to speculate confidently on his motives and sanity.
5. He is used to exercising power in his everyday life.
6. He has very limited – if any – criminal experience (inferred from his statement: "The compulsion to escape the restraints of society is something I can well *understand!*", emphasis mine).

The last point sounds like a rationalization from someone who has it in for either Spider-Man or Pete, and has convinced himself that the end justifies the means.

I think the Hobgoblin is (either I'm going to spoil it for a lot of folks or end up looking like a total yutz)... J. Jonah Jameson.

I admit the evidence is circumstantial, and the conclusion was reached before all the reasoning was done. On the other hand, how often does JJJ just "take the afternoon off"? If only you'd shown Hobgoblin smoking a cigar...

Gary Glover
P.O. Box 143
Mineral Wells, TX 76067

You may be right, Gary. And, on the other hand...

NEXT ISSUE: Having decided to quit school, Peter Parker must face one of the greatest ordeals imaginable. And there's more! Another break-in at the Osborn Company! Lunch with Harry and Liz Osborn. A brief night on the town with Mary Jane Watson. A battle royale in a Manhattan warehouse! T.L.C. with the Black Cat! And a bold new move by the Hobgoblin! There's all this and still more in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #244... on sale in just thirty days. Miss it at your own risk!

Tom DeFalco

